

Open Research Online

The Open University's repository of research publications
and other research outputs

A Home of Their Own: A Case Study of an Ethnically Diverse Community and Placement of People Seeking Asylum

Thesis

How to cite:

Richards, Louise M. M. (2009). A Home of Their Own: A Case Study of an Ethnically Diverse Community and Placement of People Seeking Asylum. PhD thesis The Open University.

For guidance on citations see [FAQs](#).

© 2009 The Author



<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

Version: Version of Record

Link(s) to article on publisher's website:

<http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.21954/ou.ro.0000ea3e>

Copyright and Moral Rights for the articles on this site are retained by the individual authors and/or other copyright owners. For more information on Open Research Online's data [policy](#) on reuse of materials please consult the policies page.

oro.open.ac.uk

SC
UNRESTRICTED

Louise M. M. Richards,
BA (Hons), MA, MScRMET.,

**A Home of Their Own: A Case Study
of an Ethnically Diverse Community and
Placement of People Seeking Asylum**

**Submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in
Social Policy**

Submission date: 19th September 2007

Date of award: 27 February 2009

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

Chapter One Introduction

Introduction	1
The creation and evolution of a dispersal programme in the UK	3
The asylum seeker crisis 1990 – 2007	7
New Labour government policy on immigration	11
Dispersal to ethnically diverse communities	14
The dispersal versus clustering debate	18
The crisis of multiculturalism	22
Community Cohesion Agenda – a dominant policy position	27
My research project	30
Romantown	33
The chapter organization and thesis structure	36
Conclusion	40

Chapter Two Literature Review and Theoretical Perspectives

Introduction	43
Boundaries and Community	45
Formation of ethnically diverse communities	46
Studies on ethnogenesis: a Barthian model	50
Modern multicultural communities	55
Multiculture, difference and identity	61
Multiculture, place and racism	67

Governance, Social Management and Multiculture	72
Central/local government policy formations	75
Conclusion	80
Chapter Three Literature review of policy on immigration and asylum	
Introduction	83
History of immigration policy in the UK: 1850-1989	84
Irish and Jewish migration to Britain	85
New Commonwealth immigration	86
Process of racialisation, the media and the emergence of racialised politics in the UK	88
Anti discrimination legislation from the 1960s onwards	89
Early dispersal policies and black and minority ethnic groups in the UK	91
Evolution of UK asylum seeker policy 1990-2006	93
Patterns of asylum movement and settlement in the UK	94
Effects of the White Paper and 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act	98
Dispersal away from London and Audit Commission recommendations	100
2002 White Paper and the Nationality and Immigration Act	102
Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006: managed economic migration and contained asylum	104
Restrictive measures: deportation, detention and dispersal	106
Dispersal and localized impacts	109
Problems encountered with dispersal	110
Localized impacts of dispersal policies – existing research findings	112
Existing asylum seeker research in Romantown	118
Conclusion	121

Chapter Four Methodology

Introduction	123
Ethnography and the Case Study approach	124
Ethnography	125
Case Study Method	130
The dispersal community of Romantown	135
Fieldwork approaches	140
Research Design	140
Semi-structured interviews	142
Focus Groups	145
Asylum seekers’ focus group	146
Residents’ focus group	148
Participant Observation	151
Daily diary and researcher role	154
Problematising research into asylum issues	158
Positionality and access	159
Ethical considerations	164
Methods of analysis	166
Conclusion	170

Chapter Five Hospitality or hostility?: Asylum seekers’ reception in Romantown

Introduction	173
Asylum and refugee settlement in Romantown: recent patterns and data	177
Resident demographics of Romantown	177

Dispersal site and arrival of asylum seekers	178
Communities within a community? Partial integrations and hospitality	180
New immigration and community	188
A common sense of community towards new asylum groups	193
Asylum seekers' experience of community in Romantown	200
The Kurdish community	200
Other asylum seeker responses	205
Flashpoints and media: the impact of external factors on Romantown	211
The national media on local issues	211
Local media and policy mistakes	213
Disparate Communities: multicultural, partial segregation and social change	217
Mobility and the process of resident change in Romantown	217
Asylum communities: hostilities and isolation	226
Global complexity, religious essentialism, ambiguity and difference	233
Conclusion: partial integration, partial segregation	239

Chapter Six Agencies, asylum seekers and the community: The different perspectives of successful local governance

Introduction	243
Policy drives towards inclusion	249
Multi-agency management of asylum in Romantown	254
Regional consortia and the local Statutory Multi agency forum	254
Voluntary Refugee Forum	257
Evolution of localised management strategies	259
Bonding and co-operation between agencies: reflections on competency and compliance	264

Local government management and control: the statutory sector reaches into the community	265
Faith community engagement	269
Committed local university and multifaith centre	276
The role of the RCO and its level of participation in Romantown	281
A change of view: narratives from within a refugee advice centre	289
Kurdish and other networks in action	291
The Refugee Advice Centre versus the Home Office and other agencies	296
Conclusion	330
 Chapter Seven Conclusion	
Introduction	307
Research retrospective and central findings	308
The research context and problem	308
Theoretical preparation	313
Policy literature preparation	315
Methodology	318
Competent communities: hospitality and hostility	320
Research findings in this section	325
Agency, governance and management of local multicultural	325
Research findings for this section	329
Wider Policy Relevance of Research Findings in Romantown	329
Looking forward, my findings and others in the field	332
Conclusion	335

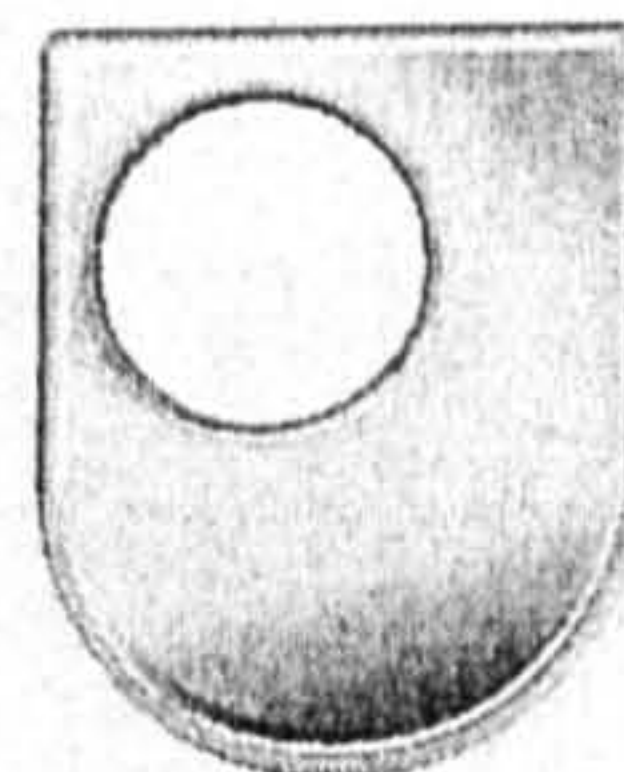
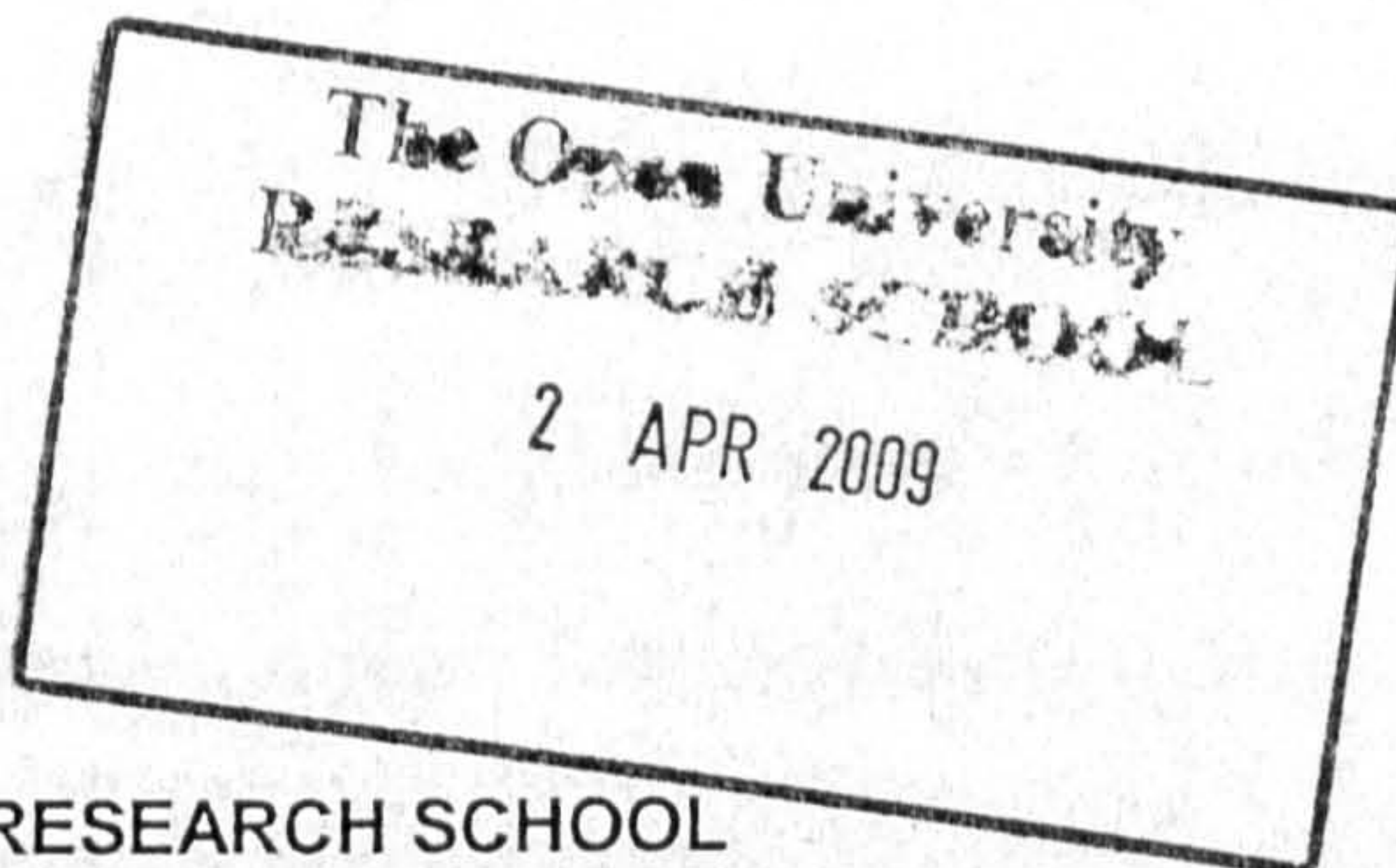
Appendices

Appendix One	Information sheet for interviewees	339
Appendix Two	Interview questions for key figures in the community	341
Appendix Three	Consent form	345
Appendix Four	Information sheet for asylum seeker focus group	347
Appendix Five	Interview questions for asylum seeker focus group	349
Appendix Six	Interview questions for residents’ focus group	351
Appendix Seven	Information sheet for residents’ focus group	353

References	355
-------------------	-----

Figures

Figure 1	Romantown	172a
Figure 2	Romantown Organisational Landscape	306a



EX12

RESEARCH SCHOOL

Library Authorisation Form

Please return this form to the Research School with the two bound copies of your thesis to be deposited with the University Library. All candidates should complete parts one and two of the form. Part three only applies to PhD candidates.

Part One: Candidates Details

Name: LOUISE RICHARDS PI: U5867865

Degree: PHD

Thesis title: A HOME OF THEIR OWN: A CASE STUDY
OF AN ETHNICALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITY AND
PLACEMENT OF PEOPLE SEEKING ASYLUM

Part Two: Open University Library Authorisation

I confirm that I am willing for my thesis to be made available to readers by The Open University Library, and that it may be photocopied, subject to the discretion of the Librarian.

Signed: Louise Richards Date: 2/04/09

Part Three: British Library Authorisation [PhD candidates only]

If you want a copy of your PhD thesis to be available on loan to the British Library Thesis Service as and when it is requested, you must sign a British Library Doctoral Thesis Agreement Form. Please return it to the Research School with this form. The British Library will publicise the details of your thesis and may request a copy on loan from the University Library. Information on the presentation of the thesis is given in the Agreement Form.

Please note the British Library have requested that theses should be printed on one side only to enable them to produce a clear microfilm. The Open University Library sends a soft bound copy of theses to the British Library.

The University has agreed that your participation in the British Library Thesis Service should be voluntary. Please tick either (a) or (b) to indicate your intentions.

(a) ☒ I am willing for The Open University to loan the British Library a copy of my thesis. A signed Agreement Form is attached

(b) ☐ I do not wish The Open University to loan the British Library a copy of my thesis.

Signed: Louise Richards Date: 2/04/09

Abstract

My thesis on asylum dispersal is written within an emotionally charged atmosphere concerning immigration, asylum, multiculturalism and Islamic extremism. In this climate of unreasoned attitudes towards asylum seeking generally, my main aim was to qualitatively investigate, via one case study area – Romantown – the persistent policy and political problem of where to place asylum seekers.

The suitability of Romantown, as a dispersal area, has ultimately concurred with polls that suggested dispersal to ethnically diverse areas created less public anxiety and reduced the possibility of violence and unrest (Flynn, 2003). As a dispersal site, Romantown also reflects the recommendations on suitability made by the Audit Commission regarding ethnic composition, the existence of refugee networks and existing places of worship for new asylum populations (Robinson et al, 2003, Audit Commission, 2000c). So the research questions I have focussed on are:

1. Do ethnically diverse communities like Romantown make better dispersal sites for asylum seekers?
2. What are the particular social and cultural dynamics that exist within this community in relation to asylum seeker dispersal?
3. How and in what ways have the range of agencies (statutory, voluntary, faith/refugee based) in Romantown engaged in the governance of multiculturalism and asylum seeker integration?

The fieldwork findings from the case study however revealed a more complex picture. Firstly there were elements of hospitality *and* tension between community residents and asylum seekers, and secondly whilst community agency management was very extensive with a

number of committed individuals, overall it was chaotic and generally badly funded. Key findings from Chapters Five and Six presented unexpected cultural divisions between Sikh and Pakistani residents and Kurdish asylum seekers although ultimately dialogue was managed through competent agency and faith community intervention.

With certain caveats, as discussed, Romantown did emerge as a strong, competent community, willing and able to manage the dispersal of new settlements of asylum seekers *despite* incidences of resident disapproval and limited resources. The case study revealed the existence of robust and active informal agency structures alongside the more visible formal ones. However, this resulted in the workings of community governance being harder to recognise as asylum groups retreated away from the public arena to form their own forum.

The ethnographic approach used here was able to illuminate the micro-social of community dynamics crucial to this line of enquiry which is complemented by the unique position of resident/researcher.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Introduction

As a determinant of suitability for dispersal, this thesis presents itself as an investigation of the relationship between a multi ethnic settled community (Romantown) in a Midlands city (Denton) and recently dispersed populations of asylum seekers. The investigation also encompasses the role of the various community agencies from the statutory and voluntary sectors involved in settlement, to assess the level of competence achieved through consultation at all levels of local community governance in Romantown.

In preparation for this case study, the dispersal of asylum seekers needs to be put into context generally. This chapter therefore begins by establishing what dispersal means in relation to migration, policy and asylum. The first section starts from a point where dispersal formed part of the more general 1960s housing and education policy based on the mainstreaming, integration and assimilation of immigrants. At that time, the clustering of black immigrants within the inner city was perceived as a problem. Although early attempts were made to reduce ethnic concentrations through housing allocation and bussing New Commonwealth immigrant children to schools in other areas (Robinson et al, 2003), voluntary dispersal with inducements was determined to be a preferable way of dealing with the problem. The arrival of Ugandan Asians in 1972 provided a dispersal watershed where racialised Asian immigrants, through sympathetic media intervention, were eventually able to settle where they wished, although not without some opposition from local authorities and residents. Although dispersal policy which avoided clustered black immigrant group living was still deemed preferable, for subsequent refugee arrivals, dispersal had proved problematic and a more laissez faire attitude

was taken to ensure that settlement areas were conducive to needs. Elements of choice were thus introduced, with refugees clustering in groups within these communities as a result.

Shifts in the world order resulted in sharp rises of spontaneous asylum applications to Europe and the UK from the early 1990s onwards, and public and policy attitudes changed (ONS, 2006, 2005). Following the introduction of the Asylum and Immigration Act of 1996, dispersal policy was aligning itself with an immigration policy focussed on deterrence and control. The next two sections set out an overview of UK immigration policy that has been fuelled by the adverse representation of the asylum crisis in populist discourse and will examine the evolution of an economically driven, rather than humanitarian, dispersal policy of the New Labour government through the notion of an ‘asylum crisis’.

Subsequent sections then move towards the main thrust of this thesis which seek to show that dispersal of asylum seekers away from London resulted in a predominance of isolation, local opposition, and violence. Dispersing asylum seekers to ethnically diverse communities, such as Romantown, has been suggested as a more humanitarian option for asylum seekers where these communities can provide a higher degree of comfort and understanding whilst cases are being heard. However, this too brings with it relational debates. Clustering of immigrant populations within British inner cities reiterates retrospective debates of clustered immigrant living approached above and discussed more fully later in this chapter; and in the wake of 9/11 and the eruption of community tensions in Birmingham, Bradford, Burnley and Oldham, has once more become a highly contentious policy issue. Strenuous policy moves towards the integration of ethnic minorities and away from segregated community living reflect the dominant policy position of the government’s Community Cohesion Agenda where ethnic communities are asked to adhere to ideas of ‘*Britishness*’, citizenship and belonging. Asylum

seekers dispersed within these communities become part of the policy drives towards integration and cohesion and their dispersal to Romantown form part of these ongoing dispersal debates.

The later sections of this chapter will provide an overview of my research project. They will present the case for the investigation of Romantown and outline the aims and objectives of this thesis. Through a brief literature review, this chapter will indicate where this project relates to and extends current thinking on asylum dispersal. The final section will finish with a brief account of forthcoming chapters and a conclusion to this chapter.

The creation and evolution of a dispersal programme in the UK

In the past ten years, the growth in numbers of people seeking asylum in Europe has radically changed European public conception of asylum seeking. Vaughan Robinson defines the 1990s as: ‘a watershed in Europe’s position in the global refugee crisis’ (Robinson et al 2003, p3, Robinson, 1996a,). He describes it as shifting from a Third World concern where oppressive regimes expelled thousands of people to neighbouring countries (and where, due to geography, Europe’s main contribution, at that time, was restricted to financial aid), to these populations autonomously finding their way to Europe (enabled through organized crime, UN and Geneva Conventions, cheaper and more prolific air routes) (ibid).

Prior to these large numbers of autonomous asylum seekers coming to the UK, refugee numbers had been managed through Geneva Convention requirements in that numbers had

been agreed prior to arrival. As a result of this, the UK government had effective control over arrival, settlement and location, with prior knowledge to the nationality and numbers arriving. Since WWII, Polish people had formed the largest tranche of refugees to come to Britain. At that time, settlement was designed primarily to disperse with the aid of resettlement camps rather than to encourage clustering, although secondary migration eventually resulted in substantial Polish communities forming (Robinson et al, 2003).

The evolution of clustered group living of African Caribbean and Asian immigrants from the 1960s onwards had been perceived publicly and officially as a problem within many cities, and will be discussed within the context of the racialisation of immigration in Chapter Three, although it will be approached here also (Solomos, 1989). The issue over *refugees* and ‘race’ emerged in 1972 when 80,000 Asians were expelled from Uganda, and out of a sense of obligation, 29,000 (who were British citizens) were allowed to settle in Britain (Robinson et al, 2003). The aim, as with the Polish refugees, was still to disperse with the aim of avoiding large clustered settlements. The Polish experience had been that after being dispersed to resettlement camps across the UK, they had subsequently found employment and accommodation locally. Dispersal of Ugandan Asians came in the wake of resultant legislation designed to reduce the rights of Commonwealth citizens to settle in Britain where patriality was only allowed to those born in the UK, or those who had close ancestral links (1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act, the 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act, the 1969 Immigration Appeals Act and the 1971 British Nationality Act) (Bloch and Schuster, 2005). As Bloch and Schuster observed: ‘this meant effectively that black people from certain parts of the Commonwealth... could more easily be deported, and this period saw the racialisation of immigration control by targeting black and Asian immigration’ (Bloch and Schuster, 2005, p495, Solomos, 2003). Therefore the arrival of the Ugandan Asians came at a time of

increased racialisation of black immigrants. However dispersal was not enforced for this group as they tended to settle with family already resident in the UK. This produced large concentrations of Ugandan Asians in London and Leicester (Schuster and Bloch, 2005, Robinson et al, 2003). Clustering of black immigrant groups was still highly contentious in the wake of Enoch Powell's 'rivers of blood' speech in 1968 (*Birmingham Post*, 22 April, 1968) and Leicester City Council in 1972 had asked these refugees to stay away. The council has only recently apologised for what now would be perceived as an uncaring and racist attitude (BBC, 8 November, 2002).

Although availability of housing was fundamental to settlement and wellbeing, a strong focus on mainstreaming into society (via welfare and housing) had now become part of a fledgling dispersal policy (Robinson et al, 2003). However, public opinion and the media still remained an influential determinant to the acceptance of the Ugandan Asians. Robinson et al quote Adams and Bristow (1979), commenting on: 'the widespread reporting of the atrocities allegedly experienced by these Asian refugees as they tried to leave Uganda', and Swinterton et al (1975) observed: 'how the press focused on their middle-class background and occupational skills and how television news emphasized the basically British way of life these Asians had experienced in East Africa' (Robinson et al, 2003, p111). Media sympathy had also played a positive role in the settlement of Chilean (3,000 1974-1979), Vietnamese (10,000 1985), Bosnian (2,585 1992 and 1995) and Kosovan (4346, 20,000 1999) refugees in a similar way (Robinson et al, 2003). With the Vietnamese refugees, responsibilities for settlement had been similar to the Ugandan Asians in that it had been devolved to intermediary bodies, notably the Joint Committee for Refugees from Vietnam and also voluntary support organisations. In the Vietnamese case as with other refugees, broad based dispersal had led to feelings of isolation and unemployment with many migrating to other

parts of the country (where communities already existed) and other parts of the World (Bloch and Schuster, 2005, Robinson et al, 2003).

With the arrival of Bosnian refugees in the early 1990s, following the breakup of Yugoslavia and the resultant crisis in the Balkans, government again devolved settlement responsibility, this time to the British Refugee Council and the British Red Cross (Robinson et al, 2003). There was still a policy towards widespread rather than concentrated settlement with an emphasis that settlement should be away from London. An added caveat to this was that trouble should be taken to resettle people within communities where a welcome was assured. The Refugee Council had put restraints on widespread geographical dispersal, and eventually six cluster areas were chosen as being conducive to refugees being dispersed there. Apart from suitable housing and generic mainstreaming facilities, people would have access to existing refugee communities, a local refugee council and a sustainable local economy. An additional element of choice of settlement area was also introduced. The result was very little secondary migration to other parts of the country which contrasted sharply with previous migrations (Robinson et al, 2003). As there had been no previous migrations of Bosnians to Britain to draw comparisons from, this dispersal was deemed a success (ibid).

The arrival of Kosovan refugees in 1999 was also passed over to the Refugee Council to coordinate. These people were only supposed to remain temporarily in Britain and living in reception centres was seen as adequate. However, charities pushed for mainstreaming close to centres as the most beneficial option. In Denton, where Romantown is situated, the local authority placed all Kosovans in the same city location (Robinson et al, 2003).

Thus refugee dispersal policies evolved in this way. Dispersal had stretched across the racialised tensions of the 1960s and 1970s where black immigrant clustering within inner cities had moved from being a public issue, to a process that saw governments delegating settlement responsibilities to particular organizations such as the Refugee Council, with a certain degree of success. Successful management, to a large extent, relied on knowing numbers in advance. The future asylum seeker crisis, because of its autonomous nature and uncontrolled large numbers, did not afford governments the luxury of preparedness or sympathetic public opinion. Issues surrounding asylum seekers became racialised in the same way it had been for previous black immigrant populations. This developed into a full blown crisis as discussed next.

The asylum seeker crisis 1990 – 2007

A fifty year history of dispersal of refugees to the UK had allowed for the evolution of a dispersal programme that had begun to tailor itself to the needs of refugees and also the country's humanitarian requirements. Other elements also helped, such as the growth of a supportive voluntary sector in settlement; devolution to local councils for the provision of housing and other amenities; and generally sympathetic public opinion to the plight of the refugee (encouraged by helpful media coverage). As previously stated, refugee numbers had been formerly agreed prior to people arriving in Britain, thus enabling advance preparations to be made and status being established upon arrival.

It was the large and uncertain numbers of asylum seekers arriving during the 1990s, without prior warning from organizations like UNHCR, or agreement by the UK, which had provoked a racist backlash from the general public, fuelled this time by an unsympathetic media (Robinson, et al, 2003). Whilst Castles observes that people were prompted by ‘war, famine, economic pressure, ethnic persecution or ecological catastrophe’, descriptions like ‘bogus’ and ‘undeserving’ in respect of asylum seekers were now being accepted into general populist discourse (Lewis and Neal, 2005, Castles and Davidson, 2000, p81). It was also felt that unlike the refugees who were seen as deserving, asylum seekers were regarded as benefit cheats, whose sole aim was to feed off the British welfare state. Claiming asylum also presented back door access rather than the more selective process via proper immigration channels. This was copiously broadcasted through the media at that time and has remained the same ever since (ICAR, 2005).

Numbers of asylum applications had begun to rise significantly from the beginning of the decade. In 1988 the UK had only received 4,000 asylum applications, but within three years this had risen sharply to 44,800 and in 2000 the figures had risen to over 98,000 (ONS, 2006, 2005, Robinson et al, 2003). UK numbers peaked again in 2002 to 103,000, but a sharp fall in 2003 to 60,000 was the start of a consistent decline. The figure had dropped to 40,000 in 2004, 30,000 in 2005, and 27,800 in 2006 (ONS, 2007). Other European countries followed a similar trajectory to that of the UK. Germany had previously accepted the largest numbers of asylum seekers (peaking in 1992 at 450,000), but eventually began to lag behind the UK and France. From 2003 onwards, France remained the highest country of choice in Europe (ibid), although it was recently overtaken by Sweden (ONS, 2007). According to Neumayer, determinants of destination choice by asylum seekers were attributed to the wealth of the country and also to historical colonial links. Another prevalent factor was the existence of networks already there

(Neumayer, 2005). The top ten nationalities of asylum seekers coming to the UK during the first quarter of 2007 were in numerical order, largest to smallest, from Iran, Afghanistan, Iraq, Eritrea, Somalia, Zimbabwe, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, and China (ONS, 2007).

UK policy on settlement during this earlier period saw the focus move away from mainstreaming and more closely align itself with an immigration policy of deterrence and control (as discussed in the next section) (Bloch and Schuster, 2005, Sales, 2005, Robinson et al, 2003). Dispersal featured prominently as offering a means of sharing the perceived burden of asylum seekers who left to their own devices, it was felt, would cluster together within major inner cities. This was again deemed as inadvisable (Bloch and Schuster, 2005). Asylum dispersal management was devolved this time to local authorities outside London. This was prompted by lack of available housing for asylum seekers in London boroughs (Robinson et al, 2003). Local authorities became part of regional consortia encompassing both the statutory and voluntary sectors in order to facilitate settlement. However, uncertainty of numbers; the non-availability of suitable housing; the inability to cope with asylum languages; and poor preparation generally within dispersal areas; added to the chaotic picture that was being presented within Parliament and through the media at the time (ibid).

With the introduction of the 1999 Asylum and Immigration Act, control of regional consortia and dispersal was now overseen by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS), however problems still existed. In reality, policy measures were based on a majority of asylum cases lasting only six months, whilst housing needs were based on availability rather than suitability (Robinson et al, 2003). Much criticism was levelled at the government by Nick Hardwick from the Refugee Council, who questioned a policy that simply dispersed people to areas with available housing without first establishing the suitability of the locality. He also felt that very

little was done to ensure that people were dispersed to areas conducive to the plight of the asylum seeker (as had been done formerly with the Bosnian refugees) (ibid). These fears proved to be well founded when the dispersal of Kurdish asylum seekers to a majority white Glasgow housing estate in Sighthill in 2001 had led to tension and conflict with one of the asylum seekers, Firsat Dag, a Turkish Kurd, being stabbed to death by Scott Burrell, a local resident (Robinson et al, 2003, BBC News, 14 December, 2001). There were also riots in Wrexham when established Iraqi refugees had to be moved to other cities because of spontaneous local hostilities toward them (BBC News, 24 June, 2003). Government therefore found itself increasingly pressurized into providing longer term more satisfactory solutions to cater for growing numbers of asylum seekers in waiting (Robinson et al, 2003).

The National Audit Commission Report, entitled *Another Country*, post the 1999 Act, was questioning welfare benefits as a draw for asylum seekers coming to the UK and thus the deterrent effect that central and more controlled management of asylum seekers was having (ibid, Zetter et al, 2003, Robinson and Segrott, 2002, Audit Commission, 2000c). The report's main concerns however, were that local agencies were again ill informed and ill prepared for dispersal which it suggested would lead to more stress for the asylum seeker and a rise in tensions within local communities (Robinson et al, 2003). It said (as quoted by Robinson et al): 'For local agencies with little knowledge of the cultural needs of asylum seekers, or the problems that new arrivals often face in using services, dispersal will represent an immense challenge. Local government and its partners need to learn fast and plan well if they are to meet the needs of this vulnerable group. Failure to do so could escalate community tensions and incur substantial long-term costs' (Robinson et al, 2003, p128, Audit Commission, 2000c, p4). It continued by suggesting that if dispersal was not managed properly, asylum seekers would become marginalized within these new communities, or just leave and move back to

London, thus defeating the object of dispersal (ibid). The government was coming under increased pressure to effectively manage what was generally perceived to be a growing problem.

New Labour government policy on immigration

Immigration has been a very busy policy site for New Labour generally. The dispersal of asylum seekers was now slotting into a general refocusing of New Labour's commitment to the reform of its immigration policy into manageable admissions and settlement (Flynn, 2003). Managed migration, as advocated in the resultant White Paper *Secure Borders, Safe Haven* (2002), was taking a more separatist approach to immigration and asylum, overtly promoting the reduction and restriction of asylum claims, and aligning immigration generally to the British economy with admissions focusing on the need for an immigrant workforce by UK based employers (Flynn, 2003).

Legislation from the 1990s onwards which stretched across the exiting Conservative government and New Labour's election victory of 1997 had begun to reflect change towards a more managed immigration strategy which sought to levy stricter controls on the UK's borders (the evolution of asylum policy is discussed in more detail in Chapter Three). Both governments held beliefs that people were now using asylum claims as a means of circumnavigating immigration control. Subsequent legislation by New Labour was to instigate what was regarded as a 'firm but fair' approach to its management (Gardner, 2006, Home Office, 2002, 2005). However boundaries between economic migrant and asylum seeker were

hard to define and deterrence of the latter would be to make the UK a less attractive place. Nevertheless, legislation had to reflect the UK's obligation as signatory to the Geneva Convention by supporting those seeking asylum during the period of their claim. New Labour, in order to maintain its popularity, implemented increasingly restrictive policies such as the reduction of welfare payments (introduced with the Immigration and Asylum Act 1996). Roger Zetter writing for the Home Office, had found that direct pre-entry measures designed to regulate entry seem to be the most effective deterrent, where accommodation, detention and withdrawal of benefits had a more limited impact (Zetter et al, 2003). The subsequent 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act separated asylum seekers further by delegating their management to NASS and introducing a vouchers scheme to replace the reduced welfare payments. This Act also cemented a dispersal strategy for those in need of financial support to be settled on a 'no choice' basis away from London.

From 1997 onwards after New Labour had come to power, there was an atmosphere of ambivalence which saw a government signing up to the Human Rights Act (1998), developing race relations legislation (Race Relations Amendment Act, 2000), and establishing the Lawrence inquiry (1999); but was becoming increasingly draconian and controversial in its attempts to separate, control and deport asylum seekers. The 1999 Asylum and Immigration Act enabled the government to take back control from local authorities, and rather than devolving control and encouraging the mainstreaming of asylum seekers as with the quota refugees before them, created NASS to manage and support asylum seekers. After a person's application for asylum via the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND), NASS now had control over asylum seeker/immigrant dispersal away from London and the South East, and was responsible for decisions regarding eligibility for asylum, housing and the provision of benefits. As Bloch and Schuster observed: 'by the end of the twentieth century, deportation,

detention, and most recently, dispersal (of asylum seekers) had become ‘normalized’, ‘essential’ instruments in the ongoing attempt to control or manage immigration to Britain’ (Bloch and Schuster, 2005, p491). To cement this central/local relationship, the ten local consortia echoing the pre act Local Government Associations (LGAs) also worked under the auspices of NASS to facilitate integration within their respective areas, and NASS had powers to co-opt other agencies if this was deemed appropriate. The 1999 Act also ended any element of choice on dispersal for supported asylum seekers (Robinson et al, 2003).

Further measures towards expedience and control were also being explored within resultant legislation as follows. The concept of accommodation centres was introduced within the Nationality and Immigration Act 2002 as part of a series of reform measures to fast track asylum claiming procedures in the UK (Kundnani, 2002). These centres were to be designed as one stop shops, where education, health and leisure provision together with advisory bodies to review asylum seeker’s legal positions could be provided on one site. The Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) supported this measure on condition that the government could ensure that people within these centres had the support of local communities (Robinson et al, 2003, Flynn, 2003, IPPR, 2001). However, complaints were made by local residents when proposals were announced to build reception centres in rural areas at the Defence Storage and Distribution Centre (DSDC) in Bicester (Oxfordshire), RAF Newton (Nottinghamshire), and RAF Throckmorton (Worcestershire). As far as the Nottinghamshire proposal was concerned, this had met with serious disapproval from not only local residents, but also (the local) Rushcliffe Borough Council, as well as the local refugee support charity Nottas (Nottas, 2004). Finally, after proposals for the Worcestershire site had been abandoned, the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, announced that the plans to build an asylum centre at RAF Newton would no longer go ahead, although he did not discount the possibility that a centre

could be built elsewhere in Nottinghamshire (Nottas, 2004). Despite planning permission having been granted for the site in Bicester, again due to local opposition, the BBC reported that it was unlikely that the building of the centre there would go ahead (BBC, 11 June, 2005).

The public's rejection of these reception centres as part of a dual track policy on dispersal (discussed further in Chapter Three), returned NASS to finding suitable accommodation for asylum seekers within cities across the UK. As noted above, pressure was also being put on NASS by the Refugee Council and the Audit Commission to find suitable dispersal sites where asylum seekers would be well managed and safe from intimidation in the wake of rising local dispersal community tensions (Wrexham and Glasgow).

Dispersal to ethnically diverse communities

High profile white hostility towards asylum seekers and the failure of reception centres as a managed solution to its asylum seeker problem left the government needing to find a successful settlement strategy. The Audit Commission and the Refugee Council had put forward factors to consider including, ethnic composition as well as existing community dynamics; the existence of established refugee networks; and the availability of places of worship for new asylum populations. All of these factors formed part of a list of recommendations for dispersal (Robinson et al, 2003). A MORI poll for IPPR in 2003 had suggested an upturn in public anxiety post 1997 that coincided with a peaking in asylum applications to the UK from the middle to late 1990s (ONS, 2005, Flynn, 2003). The poll showed that anxiety over immigration was more acute in towns and cities where immigration

was low and discussions to this effect had also been voiced as a matter of concern by Nick Hardwick (Refugee Council) at the House of Commons Standing Committee (pt3) prior to the 1999 Act (Flynn, 2003, Parliamentary Reports, 1998/9). The same poll showed ethnically diverse areas, where immigration was common as displaying far less concerns over dispersal (Flynn, 2003).

In Don Flynn's discussion paper, *Tough as old boots'?: Asylum, immigration and the paradox of New Labour policy*, written for the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI), Flynn, echoed the concerns of Nick Hardwick and the Audit Commission and promoted a commitment by New Labour to a whole programme of research, part of which would be an investigation into issues surrounding the character of modern ethnically diverse communities (Flynn, 2003, Robinson et al, 2003). Visibility for New Labour was also becoming a key issue, where public concern and media coverage over asylum seekers did not dissipate. Placing asylum seekers within ethnically diverse communities could offer a better and more workable idea because generally the inner city had become the accepted face of multiculturalism. Inner city communities were accustomed to immigration and many residents were immigrants or children of immigrants themselves. Robinson et al give examples where the desires of Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi to live with same ethnic groups had produced enclave living within major cities and internally difference was marked in this way; yet externally these communities were regarded as purely Asian (Robinson et al, 2003, 1996b, 1986). This ambivalence of visibility which could provide a cloaked existence for asylum seekers is discussed in the next section.

There was also an opportunity to make dispersal economically viable. Robinson et al had criticised government for not basing dispersal on evidence based social demographic data, but

rather on the availability of vacant (and cheap) housing in poor inner city areas (Robinson et al, 2003). Dispersal to cheap housing within a more conducive atmosphere could be the panacea that provided satisfactory solutions to the government's dispersal programme. However, there was no Home Office documentation written directly on the benefits of dispersal to ethnically diverse communities, although there were allusions within government reports as to the benefits of diversity within settlement areas (Ager and Strang, 2004). Agar and Strang's report entitled: *The experience of integration: a qualitative study of refugee integration in the local communities of Pollokshaws and Islington* (2004) formed part of an attempt by the Home Office to create a common framework for refugee (rather than asylum seeker) integration. Although Islington is an ethnically diverse borough in contrast to Pollokshaws in Glasgow which is a poor white area, rather than compare the dispersal experience between two markedly different areas of ethnic density; the aim here was to provide a framework for dispersal determined from two very different locations. In this way, any future framework could be generally rather than specifically applied. Allusions were made, within the report, to issues of tackling racism; the sensitivity of local managing agencies; and sense of welcome within Islington. For example, in relation to dealing with racism, Agar and Strang cited a non-refugee service provider from Islington who said:

It's much more of an ethnically diverse community, and you know, London's had a long history of people from other ethnic groups, so I think the issues of racism... have been tackled to some extent. You know, the police are quite sensitive in London, and so are all the services (Ager and Strang, 2004, p6)

Similarly they quoted a refugee, living in Islington, who described feeling welcomed on an Islington housing estate:

Where I live... it is a big estate... I see it as a mixed place an international kind of place. I see people speaking different languages as I am coming down stairs or coming out of the lift... it has a good feeling... you are not alone here. It gives good feeling when you are actually ... it is fine where I live (ibid, p5)

Although this presented the Home Office with an opportunity to compare integration in two markedly different communities, as previously stated was ultimately an exercise to determine measurement indicators of integration that could be generally rather than specifically applied. No direct comparison was made.

Another Home Office report (this time focused on asylum seekers) entitled: *An exploration of factors affecting the successful dispersal of asylum seekers*, by Anie, Daniel, Tah and Petruckevitch, admitted that ethnically diverse areas would give asylum seekers comfort and support. Anie et al's report also flagged up the emergence of ghettos as an undesirable by-product of dispersal to ethnically diverse areas and observed: 'there are questions about long-term impacts on social cohesion, because clustering, especially linguistic clustering, can contribute to an emerging 'ghetto' of asylum seekers and refugees in highly deprived areas. This may in turn hinder refugees' future integration into communities' (Anie et al, 2005, p7). However this report did recommend: 'further research into the links between successful dispersal and characteristics of local authorities and populations', and there were suggestions that NASS should develop good practice in dispersal (ibid, p10). Robinson et al and Hardwick's suggestions along with Audit Commission and Refugee Council recommendations that social connection within their own ethnic and religious spheres needed to be part of the framework of integration measures used for asylum dispersal, and that living alongside co-ethnics was a natural way for people to integrate into a new society; was beginning to conflict with more pressing policy concerns on integration and cohesion (suggested by Anie et al),

discussed in the next two sections (Anie et al, 2005, Robinson et al, 2003, Audit Commission 2000c, Parliamentary Reports, 1998/1999).

The dispersal versus clustering debate

It was made clear by Agar and Strang and Anie et al's reports, that the main concern by the Home Office - although there were indirect references to the benefits of dispersal to ethnically diverse communities (Anie et al, 2005) - was a focus on successful dispersal and integration (ibid, Agar and Strang, 2004).

Thus with a focus on integration and cohesion, clustered settlement and the growth of ethnic concentration (although past governments had drawn back from assimilation policies and clustering had occurred through secondary migration within communities) was again perceived as inadvisable (as discussed previously here and further in Chapter Three) (Robinson et al, 2003). Invariably, when given the choice, immigrants had clustered with their own national groups within ethnically diverse communities, thus increasing their size and ethnic density in this way. The rights of the asylum seeker to choose where they wanted to settle however had been curbed by the 1999 Act (as previously discussed) (Robinson et al, 2003). Robinson et al questioned whether the clustering of refugees and asylum seekers was actually problematic. As this thesis concentrates on the dispersal of asylum seekers to an ethnically diverse community, Robinson et al's arguments will be used to assist this line of questioning on the suitability of these communities as dispersal sites.

To examine this argument, the focus here will initially be on the *conduciveness* of dispersal to ethnically diverse areas where immigrant settlement has already been established; where feelings of isolation are understood; and infrastructures are in place for the communities they serve. However, in order to counteract the argument, I will also bring in government concerns about visibility and ‘ghettoisation’ which will proceed through to the next two sections, focussing on the perceived crisis of multicultural living which has resulted in government policy drives towards integration and cohesion.

As already noted, Robinson et al highlighted research findings where displaced people (whether immigrants or asylum seekers) wanted to live in areas where their culture and identity was reinforced rather than challenged (Robinson et al, 2003). Robinson et al argued that these established communities already understood feelings of alienation and isolation from a hostile host population, and support mechanisms, for their own comfort, were in place to counter this. It is not a great step forward therefore to assume that for asylum seekers, with the potential for extended length of stay via appeals and many choosing to remain illegally when appeals were refused, the existence of these support mechanisms and strong local networks is alluring. Zetter et al wrote on the supportive natures of Refugee Community Organisations (RCOs) which, like faith community organizations before them, provided support and aided integration that tied in well with Home Office priorities (Zetter et al, 2005, Anie et al, 2005, Agar and Strang, 2004). Also as Robinson et al pointed out, the stronger the critical mass, the stronger the likelihood for local support agencies to recognize the specific needs of the particular resident ethnic group (Robinson et al, 2003). The efficacy of extensive support mechanisms for residents and refugee communities in Romantown is discussed in depth in Chapter Six. Where there is a Home Office priority to determine the potentiality for hostility and racism from host communities (Agar and Strang, 2004), clustering can provide

respite, and this process of withdrawal is discussed theoretically in Chapter Two, and is reflected on in Romantown in Chapters Five and Six.

Robinson et al also observed drawbacks, where asylum seekers could become isolated and excluded from mainstream society within clustered communities (Robinson et al, 2003). Here they gave examples of black and Hispanic settlements in certain US cities, where particular populations were concentrated and have been characterized as then forming an ‘underclass’ (Murray, 2001) (John Rex’s position on a racialised underclass is discussed further in Chapter Two), and the relational problems and tensions that this has brought in the UK (discussed in the next section and Chapter Two) (Robinson et al, 2003, Rex and Moore, 1967). Agar and Strang also reported that a measure of integration for refugees was a wish to mix with local residents, and this may not necessarily occur readily in ethnically diverse communities where some minority residents maintain separation within their own groups (findings in Chapter Five and Six) (Agar and Strang, 2004). Robinson et al also argued from a cost perspective, that clustered minorities required specialist mainstream support mechanisms which could give rise to tension where cost is perceived as being borne through local council taxes. However, here I would suggest that the formation of multi agency dispersal and integration strategies for asylum seekers is managed more easily in areas where these specialist mainstream support mechanisms are already in place for ethnic minority residents (as discussed in Chapter Six). To support this, Lowndes and Chapman have already flagged up the existence and importance of faith community involvement to invest in the renewal of their own communities (Lowndes and Chapman, 2005).

Robinson et al commented on the visibility associated with a multiethnic population which created a distinct landscape within a city (2003): ‘when minorities are highly visible, it is often

assumed that their numbers are greater than they actually are, and, therefore, that they are more threatening than they actually are' (ibid, p164). However an earlier quoted example by Robinson et al was where Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi enclave living had produced ambivalence and where internal difference was marked, yet externally these communities were regarded as purely Asian (Robinson et al, 2003, 1996b, 1986). This may suggest that asylum seekers who are generally regarded as non-white could remain hidden within these communities. This invisibility would not occur in poor white areas where local communities have rioted and reacted violently to dispersal (as noted earlier in this chapter). Alternate points of difference in ethnically diverse communities are discussed theoretically in Chapter Two and empirically in Chapter Five. Here Robinson et al drew on the work of cultural geographer David Sibley to argue that society uses its power to separate the outsider away from general view, as does Zygmunt Bauman when describing this process of immigrant withdrawal to clustered communities in Chapter Two (ibid, Sibley, 1995, Bauman, 1990). Robinson et al went further in describing this withdrawal as: 'soothing the fears of white (British) voters who want to feel that immigration, and who is allowed to live in 'their' cities is under control' (Robinson et al, p171). Therefore the integration and ultimate spatial acceptance of asylum seekers at least could be seen to be managed within these ethnically diverse communities.

Robinson et al blamed the media however for prolonging a panic over asylum, where they said that it is the finiteness and purity of space in Britain that is perceived to be at risk (the effects of the national and local media with respect to dispersal in Romantown are discussed further in Chapter Five) (Robinson et al, 2003). They quoted Cohen, who writes on the media's relationship with public preoccupations of folk devils who disrupt the norms of society. This again ties in with discussions on the stranger in our midst discussed in Chapter Two by Bauman (ibid, Bauman, 1990, Cohen, 1987). Thus asylum therefore only forms part of a

general feeling of violated space; a non functioning immigration policy; and multiculturalism out of control. What I now want to consider is the broader contexts of immigration, integration policy, asylum and dispersal to ethnically diverse communities, where the whole question of multiculturalism in Britain is being repositioned in the wake of crisis events at the beginning of the 21st century.

The crisis of multiculturalism

Resident settlement from the 1950s onwards among minority groups had come about through a range of factors - labour market demand and employment opportunities, choice (where able), and clustering provided comfort and cultural reinforcement, plus it provided added protection against racism and constraint – social economic and/or racial. As a result there are now established multiculturally associated areas that exist within many cities across the UK – Brixton, Southall, St Pauls, Toxteth, Chapeltown etc.

With the establishment of these ethnically diverse areas, came certain spatial understanding of the multiethnic nature of British society generally. Equal worth; the celebration of diversity; the acceptance of difference but a common sense of belonging; shared values and the recognition of racism; presented a positive set of values to achieve (Parekh, 2000). However the tone changed, where fears over international and ‘home grown’ terrorism and national cohesion had increased since the Oldham and Burnley riots (2001); bombing of the twin towers in New York (9/11) (2001); bombings in London (7/7 and 21/7) (2005); Paris riots (2005); and disturbances in the Lozells area of Birmingham; where tensions erupted between

African Caribbean and Pakistani residents (*Telegraph*, 26 October, 2005). The last example brings into question particular tensions and threats to cohesion that exist between minority residents within ethnically diverse communities (findings substantiate this in Chapter Five), and again the need for a more specific approach to the study of dispersal and community dynamics that this thesis addresses.

The resultant policy shifts away from the expansive celebration of multiculturalism to policy drives towards integration and cohesion, form the scenario into which dispersal to ethnically diverse communities will be placed. The continued dispersal to my case study area, Romantown, therefore reflects these recent policy moves, where access to resident ethnic minority groups and asylum seekers has become a priority for the local statutory sectors (Chapter Six).

These events, asylum seeker policy and dispersal have been key in shaping the current debates around multicultural policy, making and a notion of a crisis. Central to this debate have been the widely publicized views by Trevor Phillips, former Director of the Council for Racial Equality, who declared that Britain was: ‘sleepwalking its way towards segregation’ (BBC News, 22 September, 2005). This propensity towards segregated living was also the main finding from a report by Ted Cantle’s and his team at the Institute of Social Cohesion, whose reported findings to the Home Office considered this slide towards parallel living as potentially quite dangerous (Phillips, 2005, Cantle et al, 2003, 2002). Cantle et al observed: ‘Whilst the physical segregation of housing estates and inner city areas came as no surprise, the team was particularly struck by the depth of polarization of our towns and cities.... Separate educational arrangements, community and voluntary bodies, employment, places of worship, language, social and cultural networks, means that many communities operate on the

basis of a series of parallel lives... there is little wonder that the ignorance about each others' communities can easily grow into fear; especially where this is exploited by extremist groups determined to undermine community harmony and foster divisions' (Cantle et al, 2003, 2.1, 2.3). Alain Touraine also referred to this type of withdrawal as 'radical' multiculturalism, and stated that withdrawal into communities could produce enclave living which, instead of allowing people to integrate, ensures that people remain within their own national group (Grillo, 2005, Etzioni, 2004, Touraine, 1997). However, Cantle et al also agreed with Robinson et al and acknowledged that segregated groups who live within communities (like Romantown) could provide a protective living for its members (which could ultimately be of benefit to asylum seekers); but warned of the dangers where poverty and intimidation could result in frustration and resentment against decaying housing stocks, and tensions could rise quickly as a result, as happened in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford (Cantle et al, 2005, 2003, Robinson et al, 2003).

These crises events and observations by both Cantle et al and Phillips have provided the catalysts for political and race relation policy drives and overtaken the defence of multiculturalism expounded by Bhikhu Parekh and Tariq Modood. All however look towards the adoption of a shared rather than segregated culture as a method of moving towards integration into mainstream British culture (Parekh, 2000, Modood, 1994, 1997). It could be communities like Romantown, which have elements of integration and segregation, that bring a combined approach and provide the step forward for its residents and asylum populations that reflect the more progressive visions expounded by Parekh in the *Future of Multi Ethnic Britain*, and away from Cantle and Phillips' separatist perceptions of multiculturalism. Parekh's integrationist stand would allow for the retention of cultural identity rather than an historical form of assimilation which seeks to impose new identities on immigrant populations

and obliterate home culture (Grillo, 2005, Robinson et al, 2003, Hartmann, 1948 quotes Kellor, 1915). Parekh advocated: ‘widening and deepening liberal integrationism to offer more room for public diversity in the public arena’, and spoke of the continued re-authorship of multiculturalism in Britain which moved away from the polarized and fixed segregationist fears of Cantle and Phillips (Grillo, 2005, p11, Parekh, 2000, p172). Fredrik Barth whose work is discussed in detail in Chapter Two, would also admit to the benefits of the continued ebb and flow between groups associated with constant changes brought about by increased immigration, with each community encroaching and borrowing (although not diluting) from the other (Barth 1966, 1969). The recognized valuing of diversity is then brought into the public arena and away from the private sphere, difference is regarded as commonplace and points of tension are all but erased (Parekh, 2000, Hall, 1997). Thus within this general atmosphere of valuing multiculturalism, the identity of the asylum seeker would be more favourably constructed.

Tariq Modood’s studies on ethnic identities also subscribed to Parekh’s idea of multiculturalism, and he stressed the ability to retain cultural identities, but embrace British culture at the same time. Modood discussed concepts of duality and *Britishness* by presenting his own empirical findings. His data suggested that many British Asians are managing to cope very well with this duality of identities (Modood et al, 1994, 1997). He reported however, that in their celebration of home culture and British culture, many had found the term ‘Asian’ too generalist and it was the specifics of ‘home’ culture combined with their feeling of *Britishness*, that determined who they were. Modood’s findings will be discussed in further in Chapter Two.

However concepts of *Britishness* have become problematised and racialised more keenly within Pakistani Muslim communities since 9/11 and 7/7. Racial hatred for some people has now shifted to the particularities of their religion and ethnicity, and as a result, Pakistani Muslims have been targeted for racial attack (Hussain and Bagguley, 2005). Whilst many subscribe to Modood's ascription of *duality* of citizenship and Parekh's celebration of diversity, some British born Pakistani Muslims may suffer from feelings of exclusion and marginalization and may retreat within the boundaries of their own communities. Modood defends British Muslims by saying: 'When Muslims do not feel threatened and powerless, they have been outward looking and expansive, generous and universal' (Modood, *Observer* 30 September, 2001). Although Hussain and Bagguley felt that there were elements of duality (as observed by Modood) and ascription to *Britishness*, they also felt that this ascription was purely pragmatic in that second generation Pakistanis were born and raised in Britain but it was their religion (Islam) and their Pakistani culture that ascribed identity (Hussain and Bagguley, 2005, Modood, 1997, 1994). Also their findings suggested that they were being racialised as a result (Hussain and Bagguley, 2005). The issues regarding the changes in direction of racism (Islamaphobia) and the limitations of expansionism within the Pakistani community in Romantown are discussed in Chapter Five.

It is the fear here of government that for young British Asian Muslims, Sharia Law and the writings of the Qu'ran conflict with notions of *Britishness* and citizenship, and as Cantle et al observed: 'there is a danger that they become exploited by extremist groups determined to undermine community harmony and foster divisions' (Cantle, 2003, 2.3). Also, that targeted racism towards this particular group will now result in these people choosing to remain living their parallel lives. Hussain and Bagguley wrote about denizenship (place of abode) rather than citizenship (place of belonging) for certain Muslim Britons, where the former provides

less security, although increasing numbers within segregated communities had provided a sense of security for some (Hussain and Bagguley, 2005, Cantle, 2005). It was the ambiguity of multiculturalism presented here that Cantle and Phillips perceived as dangerous that has steered race relations policy away from a policy of multiculturalism, to a policy emphasis on social cohesion, integration and ‘one nation’ multiculturalism, where the emphasis is on Pakistani Muslim communities in particular (Phillips, 2005, Cantle, 2004, Parekh, 2000, Barth, 1996). It is the dominance of this approach in current policy terms that is discussed next.

Community Cohesion Agenda – a dominant policy position

The recent policy drives towards integration and cohesion have been gaining momentum since David Blunkett’s (former Home Secretary) speeches on ID cards (with their proposed implementation by 2010). Also the relational introduction of citizenship testing where people seeking to become British citizens will be exposed to certain questions about what it is to be British (BBC News 19 December, 2006, BBC News, 1 November, 2005).

Policy shifts, particularly towards cohesion, have come in the wake of riots in Oldham, Bradford and Burnley in 2001 between white and Asian youths and the police (BBC News, 27 May, 2001). Cantle et al’s most recent report on Oldham challenged local communities to change, and points particularly towards lack of local community engagement; although disengagement of young people, weak community leadership, quality of police response and irresponsible local media coverage were also blamed at the time of the disturbances (Cantle et

al, 2006, 2001, Radcliffe, 2006). Regarding a Muslim mother who was discouraged from mixing with her non Muslim neighbour, Cantle et al wrote: 'such attitudes are completely untenable as a basis upon which to build cohesive communities. Nobody is suggesting enforced mixing, but all our team were struck by continuing entrenched divisions which was as much in the minds of people as in neighbourhood structures and this was at odds with experiences in other parts of the country' (Cantle, et al, 2006, p5).

Policy moves particularly to counter tensions between people of different ethnic groups and religions and aimed towards integration was the main focus of recent policy legislation, headed by the then Communities Secretary Ruth Kelly. At the launch of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion, she placed a new emphasis on community cohesion which was, quelling ethnic tensions, and where she asked for a 'new and honest' debate on diversity (Ruth Kelly's speech, BBC News, 24 August, 2006). The report by the Commission on Integration and Cohesion entitled *Our Shared Future* is to be published at the time of writing (June 2007). The aim of the report is to give insight into how communities tackle tensions and socio economic divisions between different ethnic groups (which Cantle perceives as exacerbated by segregation) and generally to encourage neighbourliness rather than separateness within communities (ibid, Cantle, 2005). The relevance of this report's findings to this thesis will be discussed further in the concluding chapter.

Ruth Kelly's maiden speech had also aligned itself with the economic management of migration to the British economy and the most efficient way of adapting skills to labour market shortages; the latter remaining in line with Flynn's observations of New Labour's managed immigration policy towards the needs of the British economy (BBC, 2006, Flynn, 2003). However, the main focus was on the dualities of diversity and change. Kelly focused on

second and third generation British Pakistanis who experienced difficulties in integrating, and white Britons who felt that inner cities generally were changing with diversity (BBC, 2006); and she echoed Phillips and Cattle on the problems associated with segregated living (ibid, Phillips, 2005, Cattle, 2005). However, she said that faith communities will not receive preferential treatment and emphasised this by saying: ‘it is also clear that our ideas and policies should not be based on special treatment for minority ethnic or faith communities. That would only exacerbate division rather than help build cohesion and as a society, we have to have the confidence to say ‘no’ to certain suggestions from particular ethnic groups’ (BBC, 2006, p2). (This change towards more integrationist strategies has manifested itself locally in Romantown where funding streams are being made available for joint rather than individual RCO schemes – see Chapter Six). Although mentioning the need to discuss asylum seeking, Ruth Kelly only approached it superficially within the speech, and avoids issues such as destitution which will also be discussed in Chapter Six (ibid). Focusing on cohesion and integration, the then Prime Minister Tony Blair, speaking after the Kelly speech, also referred to what he defined as a small Muslim minority who did not wish to integrate, but also emphasized the government’s commitment to multiculturalism and the celebration of diversity, stating that ‘multicultural living should not be dispensed with’ (BBC News, 8 December, 2006).

With community cohesion and integration now high on the current government policy agenda, issues presented here on controlled immigration; the crisis of multiculturalism; integration and self segregation of community residents; asylum and the dilemmas surrounding asylum dispersal policy; are all relevant to dispersal within the community of Romantown, and provide a backcloth to my thesis. The next section presents an account of my project, how it reflects on issues raised here, and my key research questions. There will be a brief outline of

the existing asylum seeker literature and where my project extends and differs, a brief socio demographic introduction to Romantown, and explanations as to why it is a good case study area. The chapter will finish with brief introductions to the forthcoming chapters and a short conclusion to this one.

My research project

It is within the context of issues raised within this introductory chapter that this research project aims to develop accounts of dispersal and settlement in a single case study area to which I have given the pseudonym, Romantown. At a time of focused concentration by government on community cohesion, the aim of this thesis is to qualitatively investigate the dispersal dynamics within Romantown from a local and asylum seekers constituted resident community and managing agency perspective.

Therefore, the aims of this thesis are as follows:

1. To investigate how the local multiethnic community of Romantown receives and responds to the increasing numbers of asylum seekers dispersed to their community.
2. To investigate the abilities of agencies, and organizations to manage dispersal and settlement in Romantown.
3. To contribute to debates on policy knowledge around asylum seeker dispersal in a local context.

These aims give rise to three key areas to research by asking the following questions:

1. Do ethnically diverse communities like Romantown make better dispersal sites for asylum seekers?
2. What are the particular social and cultural dynamics that exist within this community in relation to asylum seeker dispersal?
3. How and in what ways have the range of agencies (statutory, voluntary, faith/refugee based) in Romantown engaged in the governance of multicultural and asylum seeker integration?

My thesis relates and extends to previous asylum seeker research in the following ways. Initially it reflects recommendations by Cantle et al and Flynn where both recognize the wisdom of developing an honest analysis of individual ethnically diverse communities with regard to separation and segregation (Cantle et al) and community character and cohesion (Flynn) (Cantle et al, 2003, Flynn, 2003). In the wake of policy drives which focus particularly on integration and cohesion within these communities, dispersal continues to Romantown, yet government reports by Agar and Strang, and Anie et al although attempting to provide frameworks for dispersal and integration, only manage general recommendations, reference to ethnically diverse communities are fleeting, and opportunities are missed to specifically study the suitability of ethnically diverse communities for dispersal (Anie et al, 2005, Agar and Strang, 2004). My thesis emerges, therefore, amid high speculation as to the wisdom of encouraging increasingly clustered ethnic concentration within inner city areas that dispersal may exacerbate (Robinson, et al, 2003). As I noted earlier, policy drives are now increasingly moving away from the more expansive nature of multiculturalism (Parekh, 2000, Modood 1997, 1994) to focus on integrative and cohesion building strategies (CIC, 2007, Phillips, 2005, Cantle, 2006, 2005, 2003, 2001) which tend to emphasise the responsibility of minority populations in this process. The thesis has revealed elements of both integration and

segregation in Romantown which would seek to transcend qualities of desirability in both arguments and thus would extend research in this area. Legislation has now taken a more separatist and draconian line towards asylum seekers (generally deemed undeserving) by transferring asylum seeker management to NASS (Gardner, 2006, Sales, 2005). Robinson et al, (2003), Bloch and Schuster (2005), Sales (2005), Lewis and Neal (2005) and Zetter et al, (2005) have all commented on the draconian and often ambiguous effects of these increasingly restrictive measures aimed towards asylum seekers.

With this in mind, this thesis hopes to reflect on these measures at a local level to determine their effects within Romantown. In line with this thinking, the very qualities that exist within communities like Romantown that were recommended by the Audit Commission and the Refugee Council post the 1999 Act as conducive to dispersal may, in effect, also be too generalized (Robinson et al, 2003, Audit Commission 2000c). Particular culture rather than religious similarities form the character of this community and tensions have erupted because of this, so this thesis addresses the need for individual investigation rather than generalization here. There is also need to extend Robinson et al's research on the effects of clustering within deprived urban areas like Romantown where a strong sense of community and locality does exist and contradicts the images of the dystopian heavily segregated inner city that the urban unrest of 2001 and subsequent reports flagged up (see above, Cattle et al 2001). Cattle's recommendations for cohesive interacting management strategies (2006) are already in place in areas like Romantown although there are other more pressing issues on funding for pivotal agencies that need to be addressed.

Hiding asylum seekers away from the public eye within ethnically diverse communities could also provide a solution where anxiety over asylum generally was polled as less in these areas,

although there was conflicting thinking as to whether clustering increased or reduced visibility (Anie et al, 2004, Robinson et al, 2003, Flynn, 2003, IPPR, 2003). The questions I will be asking in Romantown will focus on whether community organisation is established enough to provide the necessary infrastructure required to temper feelings of isolation and marginalization and to keep tensions under control. Also whether the local multiethnic community is likely to be more empathetic and hospitable, and less anxious than more culturally homogenous, mainly white communities, or whether hostility, suspicion and conflict are also features of Romantown's response to asylum seeker settlement.

Romantown

It is the growing diversity of Romantown that absorbs large numbers of asylum seekers (since 2001) yet maintains an element of calm that makes it an interesting area for study. It is also where I live. As far as the extent of its diversity is concerned, Romantown has a history of immigration spanning sixty years and most of the diasporic moves of the 20th century are reflected in the population here (for further demographic information, see Chapter Four). Also purely from a logistical research viewpoint, it is not very large (13,500 people) (ONS, 2006, Weller, 2003).

From a socio economic viewpoint, Romantown, on the indices of deprivation, scores 44.70 (ONS, 2003). Categories such as child poverty score 53.55 here as against 6.32 in less economically deprived wards of the city. The number of people on benefits in Romantown is high at 2011, yet the number of small and own account workers is also high at 1145 which

would account for the high incidence of Asian businesses in the area (ibid). So, although Romantown is economically poor, it has a thriving local economy.

Within Romantown, segregated areas exist where there are statistically low numbers of Pakistanis migrating to other parts of the city (see Chapter Five). Numbers of asylum seekers generally remain static until claims are decided upon. This makes it interesting as far as segregated and parallel living is concerned (Phillips, 2005, Cattle et al, 2003). However, there are also expansionist elements of multiculturalism here which are reflected through the local Sikh community (see Chapter Five) (Parekh, 2000).

There have also been examples of *unexpected* tensions that erupted as reported by the national newspapers (see Chapter Five). The *Daily Mail*, (Saturday January 3, 2004) took advantage of the situation, and focused its attentions on *complaints* rather than the expected cooperation by existing minority populations. Earlier articles in the local newspaper also reported tensions about the allocation of a surgery to asylum seekers, but later articles were low key and focused on integration successes rather than failures (again discussed in detail in Chapter Five) (*Denton Evening Telegraph*, 2005, 2004, 2003, 2002). Newspaper articles like these can inflame tensions (as observed by Robinson et al), but all groups have managed to meet and discuss problems at local council organised meetings and tensions have been managed in this way. It is again this type of dynamic for the resolution of tensions which makes this community an interesting case study. The form and analysis of the complexities of agency and resident dynamics on settlement are researched in depth in Chapters Five and Six and can be viewed in snapshot in Figure 2 (at the end of Chapter Six).

Finally, along the lines of the most recent government policy initiatives on community cohesion and integration, Romantown's local Community Safety Partnership (CSP) presented its own report (Hurrell, 2007). It suggested that in Romantown and the city of Denton there was: 'a shifting sense of belonging, with some communities being drawn back into themselves and becoming less likely to participate in the wider life of the city' (ibid, p3) Thus the report also echoed fears by Cantle et al and Phillips that groups were retreating within their own communities rather than mixing with others, and quoted respondents: 'everybody used to know each other; we would pick the teams from everybody on the park. Today they turn up to the park with their own teams and fight for their territory..... people fight for *their* community, not *the* community.... It's about where we can't live, not where we can' (ibid, p3). The executive summary identified rumour and territorial disputes as potential tension triggers and referred directly to the propensity towards segregated living where it recommended that 'people feel able to come out from their silos' and the need to reassure people (ibid, p5). From a statutory viewpoint, therefore, in Romantown there is room for concern. This case study however hopes to present a more balanced community perspective on Romantown where Chapters Five and Six present dispersal from both a residents and local agency viewpoint. The local CSP report focused heavily on access and integration of hard to reach groups from a statutory agency perspective which may mean that it missed the particular nuances that this distinctive multicultural community has in its ability to manage its asylum seekers.

The chapter organization and thesis structure

Reflecting the themes and issues examined here, the thesis is organized in the following way:

Chapter Two sets out the four key concepts that this thesis relies on: boundary, multicultural, community and governance. It does this through a theoretical literature review which draws on a strongly interdisciplinary social science perspective. This includes social anthropology, sociology and social policy. Primarily it investigates the position of the stranger in contemporary UK society and how ethnically diverse communities are formed. It also provides arguments for the potential of acceptance of asylum seekers within these particular community dynamics. From social anthropology, the thesis draws on Fredrik Barth's (1969) work on boundaries and an analogy is then utilized to examine cohesiveness where the cultural boundaries that surround predominant resident groups are examined in detail. The chapter also uses Sandra Wallman's (1980) study on Battersea and Bow to help put Romantown into context. Wallman similarly used a Barthian analogy to establish: 'what differences of context accounted for marked contrasts in ethnic relations within the same inner city' (Wallman, 1988, p235), and from which to suggest the particular rather than general cohesiveness that can occur within ethnically diverse communities.

The chapter proceeds to discuss notions of imagined community and incorporates the theoretical writings by Vered Amit and Nigel Rapport (2002) who quote Benedict Anderson (1983), where propinquity and social affiliation of community are no longer linked and communion becomes imagined. Sarah Neal's writings on the pursuit of rural Englishness by white communities who escape the inner city to re-establish English identity (2002) balance with the minority ethnic establishment of a real not imagined community presence within the inner city. The inner city as a place of community and strength is complemented by Pnina

Werbner's writings on Pakistani enclaves but equally conflicts with Cattle's writings on the unwise of segregated living.

The chapter then continues with Stuart Hall's (1997) interdisciplinary observations on the perceptions of difference within the spatial dimensions of Romantown, to deduce how the *other* (asylum seekers) are observed where racialised connotations may differ within Romantown. The study of the ethnically diverse community then moves from a theoretical viewpoint to a spatial one. Here literature on community presents the multicultural inner city from the 1950s onwards in socio economic terms, where rioting and poverty created a picture of socio economic disadvantage. The second part of the chapter utilizes the work of Susan Wright and Michel Foucault to explore the possibilities of *competent* or *compliant* public engagement of communities and the often resistant nature of the governance of local communities and multicultural populations (Carter, 1997, Wright, 1994, Foucault, 1980f).

Chapter Three presents a review of policy literature which aims to provide the foundations for understanding the evolution of restrictive asylum policy measures from increasingly restrictive immigration policies. Initially John Solomos provides a history of immigration policy in the UK which demonstrates the evolution of increasingly punitive policy measures that amounted to selective immigration processes focusing generally on the restriction of African Caribbean, Asian and Pakistani immigration (Solomos, 1989). Although counter legislation has been introduced which allows for the creation of local Race Equality Councils, Solomos points to a policy aimed more at social order, rather than anti discrimination, and blames policy for the creation of alienated black populations (ibid). The chapter considers Vaughan Robinson et al's work on refugee dispersal within inner cities (2003) and its dominant construction/perception as a social order problem, and spends some time looking at the political anomalies of New

Labour, which, rather than tempering restrictive asylum legislation, chooses to introduce successive asylum and immigration legislation. It also considers Don Flynn's (2005) observations that this dual re-fixing of migration has been focused on the needs of the British economy coupled with the erosion of rights for asylum seekers. Again, the commentaries provided by Robinson et al on dispersal; inclination towards old assimilationist practices; speedy returns processes and the role of organizations such as the Audit Commission and the Refugee Council; all provide a focus of discussion in this chapter.

Chapter Four presents a methodological narrative that seeks to capture the direct experience of asylum dispersal in Romantown and provide the tools to empirically anchor this project. The case study community of Romantown is introduced and the use of case study as an ethnographic approach discussed. This approach is used to complement the theoretical and policy based assumptions already presented, and provides a flexible approach that will: 'ground the phenomena observed in the field', to establish the micro social of community and agency relationships in Romantown (Bazanger and Dodier, 1997, p8). The chapter details the design of the research and the processes of setting up and being in the field. It discusses a range of multiple qualitative methods issues – access, the interviews, the interview schedules, the focus group interviews, and participant observation (see interview and focus group schedules Appendices Two, Five and Six). As a single case study, findings in Romantown will not be generalisable but will stand alone as pertinent only to this community, although some issues could be transferred from one setting to another on the basis of 'fit' (Hammersley, 2003, Donmoyer, 1990, Lincoln and Guba, 1989, 1985, Stake, 1978). Through the use of qualitative methodological practice and analysis supported by theoretical and policy based literature, the chapter argues that this project will make a novel contribution to existing research because of its uniqueness as a dispersal community placement. The examination of

agency as well as resident and asylum seeker dynamics in Romantown is crucial in determining the quality of the space provided. Other empirical studies on asylum settlement will also be gauged as a comparison of location, type of dispersal, and relevance to my own study. The chapter briefly discusses the race of the interviewer effect when researching on ethnicity with minority communities; it covers ethical considerations when researching a vulnerable group and the power differentials in research. The reflexivity of the research and problems encountered by myself as a researcher living and researching in my own community will also be examined.

Chapter Five, the first of two empirical chapters, begins to look at the micro-social level of interactions within the community. Primarily it focuses on the type of interaction – characterized by hospitality and/or hostility - that existed between predominant ethnically defined groups and the extent of interaction with each other and with asylum groups. Through discussing notions of *Britishness*, purity, difference and hybridity, the chapter investigates the strength and the porosity of boundaries surrounding the community of Romantown, to determine levels of integration and segregation within the community, and the effects that outside media coverage of events has; how established these hierarchical structures are, and how these methods of dialogue that appear within the community may be passed onto asylum groups coming in.

Chapter Six focuses primarily on Romantown's complex networks of the statutory, voluntary, refugee and faith/community sectors which have emerged or been put in place to manage and facilitate a stable multicultural community. It looks at how these organizations interact with each other and the community itself and whether they provide the supportive networks necessary for successful integration of new immigrant groups of asylum seekers. This chapter

also explores the role of faith leaders, the level of cooperation between national groups and begs the question whether *cooperation, toleration, facilitation* or all three form the basis for successful dispersal within this community. However, it also focuses on the uniqueness of agency interaction here but also on funding shortages. These two empirical chapters, through notions of hospitality and hostility seek to present a picture which captures the fragility and uneasy balance that surrounds dispersal in Romantown.

Chapter Seven is the concluding chapter which after an appraisal of these forthcoming chapters, provides a series of insights as to the type of reception Romantown can provide for its new populations of asylum seekers.

Conclusion

The themes and issues on dispersal, multiculturalism, community, integration and cohesion that have been raised in this introductory chapter and its effects on community, multiculture, reception, hospitality and hostility towards asylum seekers, will feature throughout the thesis. Here the term *community* is paramount as the focus for its intellectual interrogation remains topical as prime ministers change within the present New Labour government. The CIC Report, *Our Shared Future*, based itself very much on the local characteristics of communities like Romantown, their increasing complexity, and the problems that government faces in its attempts to access its hard to reach citizens (CIC, 2007, Communities and Local Government, 2006, Amit and Rapport, 2002). The CIC report and Denton Community Safety Partnership report refer to communities adapting to one another (CIC) and rubbing shoulders rather than

outwardly promoting assimilated living (CSP) (ibid, Hurrell, 2007). Historical social transformations form ethnically diverse communities, however factors such as industrial decline and urban poverty, and the diversity and transience of populations (asylum seekers and residents) all form part of what is the ethnically diverse dispersal community. Large sections of the 'community' of Romantown are based on affiliation to faith and cultural groups, but it is also a community based on aggregation and community concerns (Chapter Five). Via agency and the individual, the asylum seeker will be received into this community and this thesis attempts to assess the manner of reception they will receive here.

Chapter 2

Literature Review and Theoretical Perspectives

Introduction

This chapter provides the theoretical grounding for the empirical studies of resident and local governance dynamics in Romantown and the potential for its accommodation of asylum seekers. It is split into four main sections: boundaries and community; multiculture difference and identity; multiculture place and racism; and governance social management and multiculture.

The first section is split into two parts and concentrates on the formation and existence of ethnically diverse communities. The initial part begins with an examination of boundaries between groups and how ethnically diverse communities may form. The socio/anthropological ideas of Gregory Bateson and Zygmunt Bauman are used here to elucidate moments where the placement of the stranger within our society may prompt withdrawal away from hostile populations (Bauman 1990). The seminal writings of Fredrik Barth are then used to examine the particular features of boundary construction in Romantown where limited interaction between predominant community groups (who share historical and geographical links) has prevented tensions from building (Barth, 1966, 1969). Also Barthian observations on the pariah will be included here where certain residents may share this characteristic with asylum seekers (ibid). This use of a Barthian analysis is contextualized by the work of Sandra Wallman in grounding it in a contemporary empirical context (Wallman, 1988).

In the second part of this section, notions surrounding the contested, but widely used idea of 'community' will be explored. The term 'community' (denoting harmony) is still used to describe the inner city, where broad-based social affiliations may in fact have broken down (Amit and Rapport, 2002). However, where some communities have suffered from white flight and lack of investment, other communities like Romantown have risen up to form strong neighbourhoods. With community cohesion firmly placed on the policy makers' agenda, the ambivalence of the ethnically diverse communities thus becomes a focus for attention.

The second main section of this chapter utilizes an interdisciplinary approach to the study of multicultural, difference and identity which have become key axes of debate with regards to, amongst other things, asylum seeker dispersal. Where western discourse racialises difference by imposing 'otherness' on black identity, communities like Romantown become racialised as result of its situation, where powerful discourses on race (and asylum) may manifest themselves in other ways. Stuart Hall's writings are utilized to assist thinking here and his observations on new identities are also incorporated (Hall, 1997).

The penultimate section focuses on the literature of urban politics, racial inequality and the emergence of institutionalized racism that has permeated racial relations and tensions of the 1970/80/90s and into the new millennium. Hall's work again informs this discussion along with John Solomos who comments on how institutionalized racism and racialised constructions of *Britishness* have cemented racial inequality, resulting in disturbance and tension within some inner areas. However regeneration has also sought to counter inner city dilapidation where communities like Romantown have benefited from this type of investment.

The final part of this chapter presents a Foucauldian analysis of governance, where his anti-essentialist stance is used to link into a movement away from a black pathologised underclass to discuss the ability of communities to engage and resist (Carter, 1997, Foucault, 1980f). Ideas on collective knowledge are also presented within a Foucauldian context to illuminate governments' need to acquire knowledge (Miller and Rose, 2001, Carter, 1997). Susan Wright's studies on competence and compliance, complement Foucault's writings to show that host communities like Romantown could be classified as competent negotiators on dispersal alongside the agencies that manage them (Wright, 1994). To develop this idea of competence there is a brief review from a community perspective, of the potential for engagement by voluntary agencies, Refugee Community Organisations (RCOs) and faith communities.

The chapter will conclude with an appraisal of the theoretical ideas that have been put forward and how these will then link into Chapters Five and Six.

Boundaries and Community

Although discussions in Chapter One on dispersal policy seem to indicate policy drives away from clustering immigration within inner cities, there was much literature to support the wisdom of dispersing asylum seekers to ethnically diverse communities, where general feelings of isolation are understood by the immigrant populations already there, and where ethnic management strategies are already established. There is always a danger however, to generalize the dynamics within these communities. It is often the umbrella term used by policy makers 'Asian, Black or Ethnic' when referring to an ethnically diverse community (as

commented on by Robinson et al in Chapter One), that is a sufficient marker for difference against the wider white community, and provides little or no thought as to the ethnic, religious or cultural makeup of the people that actually live there (Robinson et al, 2003).

Before examining the particular dynamics within Romantown, there is a need to understand how and why ethnically diverse communities form initially; how and why they remain; and the particular nature of interaction between groups from an insider and outsider viewpoint; to determine the possibilities for acceptance (or rejection) of asylum seekers into the community.

Formation of ethnically diverse communities

In order to understand the formation of ethnically diverse communities, the work of Zygmunt Bauman usefully discussed the differences between *us and them*. Like Stuart Hall's work, which I discuss later in this chapter, Bauman saw difference and the acknowledgement of difference as normal and fundamental to human existence and our place in the world (Bauman, 1990, Hall, 1997). However, Bauman created a tangible division where *them* became something more than just an acknowledgement of difference and (like asylum seekers) something to be kept separate and observed. Here he introduced us to the notion where *them* instead of being known to us, became the *stranger* (Bauman, 1990). Ahmed developed this by examining people who had been cut off from their cultural histories (through asylum seeking for example) who were seen as strangers and misfits within neighbourhoods, communities and nations (Ahmed, 2000). Bauman noted: 'by their sheer presence, which does not fit easily into any of the established categories, that strangers deny the very validity of the accepted oppositions' thus making them something to be feared (Bauman, 1990, p54). He quoted Mary Douglas on the problems of the stranger who: 'floats ambiguously in some unstable,

dangerous, hybrid zone of indeterminacy' (Hall, 1997, p236, Bauman, 1990, p54, Stallybrass and White, 1986, Douglas, 1966), and on their tenacity where 'whether I want it or not, they sit firmly inside the world which I occupy and in which I act and do not show signs of leaving' (Bauman, 1990, p55).

Crucially Bauman continued that, it is the observance and the ambiguity of the stranger's position that promoted the need to construct precise boundaries within a human constructed world which: 'send us an unmistakable signal as to what to expect', thus although the stranger remained visible, the ambiguity disappeared (ibid, p55). The formation of an ethnically diverse community has already gone through this gating process and the acceptability of its existence relies, to a certain extent, on its visibility; it is generally known to be where the strangers live thus becoming the *out group*, and in so doing, enforces the identity of the *in group*. However the *out group* is still comprised of strangers, so never fully taking on the normalcy of the *us and them* scenario (ibid). They still remain very much the unknown and the extent of this chasm can result in tension. Additional strangers, in this case asylum seekers, introduced into an already established ethnically diverse community, will follow the process in a step-wise sequence. The asylum seekers too follow earlier immigrants and to those of the *in group* become part of the *out group* and in this way enforce the identity of the *in group*. However, the question arises here, what happens to the existing *out group*? It is this question more than any other that this thesis addresses. The presence of asylum seekers in Romantown will present a challenge to the way of life within this established population, however small the perceived difference between the resident and new groupings may be.

Potential tension making situations in Romantown maybe avoided, firstly through the agreed withdrawal of immigrant populations (*out group*) to their allotted space (Romantown), but

also through agreement by the *out group* to accommodate strangers (asylum seekers) so that they can retain this space. To demonstrate this line of argument, Gregory Bateson (observed by Bauman) created the term *schismogenesis* to explain the chain reactions which could follow hostile attitudes between groups, resulting in the formation of minority ethnic groups away from the majority population (Bauman, 1990). It is these *degrees* of separateness that occur and possible reciprocity and moments of encounter and exchange to the *in group* that are discussed here.

Initially where schisms exist between groups and neither side will back down, the end result is termed a *symmetrical schismogenesis* where a standoff leads to conflict (Bauman, 1990). A more complementary form of *schismogenesis* arises when the *in group* applies pressure to concede until such time as the *out group* retaliates or leaves. In this case the dominant white majority in the UK may accept the presence of ethnic minority immigrants on the condition that the minority demonstrates its acceptance of the *in group* by removing themselves to their allotted space, forming an ethnically diverse community. This removal to their allotted space, which Bateson termed *reciprocity*, has elements of the previous schismogeneses but is not destructive because of reciprocal needs of both groups, where the *out group* needs to be visible to the *in group* (ibid). Hall referred to this removal as: ‘the binding or bonding together of all of Us who are ‘normal’ into one ‘imagined community’; and it sends into symbolic exile all of Them – ‘the Others’ – who are in some way different – ‘beyond the pale’” (Hall, 1997, p258). Within complementary *schismogenesis*, the *in group* has no desire to come into conflict with the *out group*, therefore as a reciprocal gesture, the *out group* who also do not want conflict remove themselves to a recognizable place where boundaries can be drawn and their position becomes less ambiguous to the *in group*, thus creating comfortable positions for both groups. This *reciprocity* may overflow to include asylum seekers joining the *out group* where this

action may help cement the position of the *out group* with the *in group* (*delayed reciprocity*). Residents of ethnically diverse communities have therefore had to back down in this case to the dominant white majority (*in group*) through acceding to the pointlessness of *symmetrical schismogenesis* which would lead to conflict, accepting the requirement of the *in group* in *complementary schismogenesis* by retiring to their allocated space, then displaying elements of *reciprocity* by accepting asylum seekers into their group.

Reciprocity to the white majority, within the community itself and to asylum seekers, may therefore ensure acceptance of new groupings of asylum seekers coming into the community in this way. However there is always danger of reciprocity slipping back into symmetrical and *complementary schismogenises* (Bauman, 1990). If the *out group* feels that its position is gaining in strength, then negotiations with the *in group* become increasingly competent and the *out group* may find itself in a stronger position that encourages the *in group* to increasingly reciprocate. This process may be affected by third parties, especially local policy makers. The successful dispersal of asylum seekers is becoming an increasingly difficult problem for policy makers because they require the assistance of ethnically diverse community residents to accommodate asylum seekers. Hence relationships may change in favour of the *out group* whose bargaining position becomes stronger.

In tandem with these general processes of boundary formation, we need to understand local articulation in places like Romantown. This discussion is guided by Fredrik Barth's seminal studies of the 1960s where he coined the term *ethnogenesis* to explain the processes where the ebb and flow between different ethnic groupings allow for the retention of cultural boundaries and alleviation of tensions between groups (Jenkins, 2003, Barth, 1969, 1966). This section will also emphasize the uniqueness of ethnic community boundary processes through the

contextualization of Sandra Wallman's studies of Battersea and Bow. The section will conclude with the Barthian notion of the asylum seeker as pariah, which may be a deciding factor for asylum seeker acceptance into the community, although other factors such as reciprocity may also be key here.

Studies on ethnogenesis: a Barthian model

Fredrik Barth's anthropological writings are judged by some to be too far removed from a western setting, but for my purpose it is the partially segregated nature and the particular ethnic makeup of Romantown that can stand analysis from this perspective (Rex, 1986, Barth, 1969). Barth's studies on the Pathan peoples (among others) (Barth, 1969) informs this study of Romantown directly because both predominant groups of Pakistanis and Indian Punjabi Sikhs bear geographical and ecological similarities to peoples in the original study whose location straddles India, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

It was from this original study that Barth deduced that the manageable nature of the cross cultural relations could persist even when ethnic groups migrated to another country (Barth, 1969, 1966). An ethnic characteristic of the Pathans is that they retain their cultural traits, which are borne out by the ethnic group definitions that Barth quoted as being: 'largely biologically self-perpetuating' (Barth, 1969, p2). This transcendence becomes more workable on secondary movement to another country where cultural differences between the immigrant and the wider settlement community remain separate. As Barth observed: 'where there is less security and people live under a great threat of arbitrariness and violence outside their primary community, the insecurity itself acts as a constraint on inter-ethnic contacts' (Barth, 1969, p21). It is this withdrawal within culture that maintains the ethnically diverse community, but

also maintains cultural boundaries from within the community as well. Barth suggested that interconnectedness between different ethnic groups may fail to develop, even when similarities exist (ibid). He continued that interaction maybe blocked because of lack of trust, which resulted in overt conformity within the cultural boundary and a resultant emphasis on support from within, rather than outside their ethnic group, where any deviation from this behaviour maybe seen as weakening the group (Barth, 1969). In these incidences it was the elites that spoke for the group. This type of behaviour characterizes Punjabi Sikhs and Pakistani Muslims in Romantown where cultural boundaries remain strong. In the case of Pakistani residents, most choose to remain within Romantown and marry their children off to immediate family, thus biologically perpetuating the group. However, it is perhaps the interdependency and the similarities of culture of these two groups that creates a positive bond and stable situation within Romantown (Barth, 1969), and tensions were not replicated here where in the Indian Punjab, partition to create Pakistan had caused localised violence between these groups (ethnic demographics of Romantown are discussed further in Chapter Four). As previously stated, Barthian analysis has been used here because of similarities of groups studied and the partially segregated nature of Romantown. When Rex posed the question: ‘Who is a Pathan and who is not a Pathan?’, he denigrated Barth’s anthropological studies generally as too pure to be translated to a western setting where he questioned whether within western societies: ‘there were ethnic groups which could be isolated for study at all’ (Rex, 1986, p87, Barth, 1969). In this instance, however, Romantown has partial elements of self segregation and also strong geographical and historical connections to Barth’s original studies where the purity of his investigations would bear out.

If Romantown and communities like it are thus regarded for research purposes as a workable translation of Barth’s findings, how will asylum seekers be received in them? Barth observed

those who did not fit within any particular ethnic groups, viewed as pariahs, and Douglas's observations on ambiguity would also seek to establish asylum seekers as pariahs (Hall, 1997, Barth, 1969, Douglas, 1966). Immigrant minorities who have gone through the gating process of settlement may or may not be placed as such (Barth, 1969). However there are extreme minority positions in which certain groups are regarded as pariahs and for whatever reason, they have been actively rejected by the host population (Barth, 1969). Asylum seekers could fall within this category as they are certainly rejected by the larger society and much has been done via dispersal policy to ensure that they do not assume normal status, thus remaining in a separate category from where integration is difficult. The effect of restrictionist measures on asylum seekers will be dealt with more fully in Chapter Three.

So how does pariah affect the position and status of asylum seekers within Romantown? The strength of boundaries surrounding predominant groups has already been determined as a characteristic of Romantown, so what would be the nature of boundaries that surround asylum seekers? Barth observed: 'the boundaries of pariah groups are most strongly maintained by the excluding host population', thus the identity of the stranger is maintained by the wider British public (Barth, 1969, p17). However he also maintained that: 'many minority situations have a trace of this active rejection by the host population' (ibid), thus ethnic minorities also suffer some of the stigma of the pariah. He went on to say that: 'within a poly-ethnic system, the contrastive cultural characteristics of the component groups are located in the non-articulating sectors of life. For the minority these sectors constitute a 'backstage' where the characteristics that are stigmatic in terms of the dominant majority culture can covertly be made the objects of transaction' (ibid). Thus asylum seekers, instead of remaining the pariah and separated as they would be by the host population, become accepted by the minority group that also feels the brunt of being treated as a pariah.

The characteristic strength and porosity of the Pathan boundaries is reflected by Romantown's Pakistani and Indian Sikh residents, where interaction takes place (the ebb and flow) whilst cultural characteristics remain very much in tact. This feature of established boundaries and the retention of lines of demarcation are encouraged by various agencies. For new asylum groups coming into community, *tok tok* or dialogue is managed by faith and refugee community leaders via statutory organised meetings and via local ethnic group meetings (Wright, 1994). Community governance, from a Foucauldian perspective, will be discussed at the end of this chapter and analysis on empirical findings within Romantown will be discussed in depth in Chapter Six.

A Barthian analysis is also utilized and contextualized by Sandra Wallman in her work in Battersea which, in many ways, corresponds closely with my work in Romantown. Wallman used Barth to observe the dynamics of the South Asian diaspora in Battersea and the maintenance of boundaries between themselves and others within and outside the community (Wallman, 1988). She recorded the nature of ambiguities with ethnic marking where those within the community differentiated themselves into their own specific cultural/religious groupings that would be recognized within community settings. When applied within a British context however, they are placed generally under the Asian banner (also observed by Robinson et al in Chapter One) (Robinson, et al, 2003, Wallman 1988). Of course, through the teaching of ethnic and religious diversity in schools, cultural/religious groupings are becoming more specifically defined and the introduction of the religious question in the most recent 2001 Census has also sought to normalise these external effects (Weller, 2005, ONS, 1999). Within some segregated ethnically diverse communities (like Romantown), the internal definitions that Wallman describes can be particularly strong and external definitions may in some cases cease to hold relevance at all (as is the case with some of the Pakistani Muslim

populations within Romantown which is discussed in the following main section and Chapter Five) (Wallman, 1988).

Wallman's comparison of the two ethnically diverse communities of Battersea with Bow however, led her to question: 'what differences of context account for marked contrasts in ethnic relations within the same inner city?' (Wallman, 1988, p235). As observed earlier, this may have relevance to the ethnic mix of these communities and also reflect how segregated and integrated the ethnic minority communities are. As Wallman noted of local minority populations in each community: 'the overall contrast is between a relatively closed and homogeneous system in the Bow version and a relatively open and heterogeneous system in the Battersea case' (ibid, p236). However, she did not choose to compare these two communities on the basis of their ethnic composition but because one was considered racist towards its ethnic inhabitants and the other was not. Her findings did highlight differences that were key, such as, that housing and employment were relevant to their expansive or insular nature. As far as Romantown is concerned, from a Barthian perspective, it has strong similarities to his original studies and can be analysed similarly where findings will transpose. Nevertheless it is unique, and the use of single case study reflects this and is researched here accordingly. There are aspects of Romantown that must be affected by external factors and the following section, still using an anthropological approach which involves Barth, looks at notions of movement, identity, collectivity and racism, essentially this time from a western viewpoint and the resulting effect this has had on western notions of 'community'.

Modern multicultural communities

It is the ebb and flow between predominant groups in Romantown that presents a feeling of physical union and tangible community. A more general concept presents a symbolic notion of 'community' and the breaking down of social interaction that is approached here. For many 'community' can present an isolated space where social connections have become fragmented through physical movement or poverty. For some communities therefore, the settlement of asylum seekers has become the final nail in the coffin and asylum seekers dispersed to these communities have met with hostility, hatred and in some cases death (as discussed in Chapter One). The contextualization of community will be explored further in the penultimate section.

The steady retreat (white flight) from established inner city communities is often to badly designed social housing in other areas which subsequently become problem areas themselves. There are examples of this in Denton city where Romantown is situated. The inner city itself often left behind does not fare any better and becomes a place of urban unrest and disorder, where latterly much of the Victorian housing stock has been allowed to crumble (although government regeneration budgets have sought to address this). It is this combined rather than separate marginalization of ethnicity and class that Rex spoke of, in that both groups suffer as a result (Rex, 1986). It is from this position too that Amit and Rapport note that community moves away from 'actual social relations to the symbolically demarcated categories of identity' (Amit and Rapport, 2002, p45).

Community, within the inner city, presents a scenario where social affiliations are not necessarily based on close proximity anymore (Amit and Rapport, 2002, Cohen, 1985). As Amit and Rapport wrote: 'Amongst the dense, diverse and transient populations of large and rapidly growing cities, one could no longer presume social affiliations and relationships from

the mere fact of propinquity. People might live alongside each other, cheek by jowl, but the social distance separating them could still be a chasm of class, ethnic, occupational and age difference, a ‘mosaic of little worlds that touch but do not interpenetrate’ (Amit and Rapport, 2002, p42, Park, 1925 as cited in Hannerz, 1980, p26). Thus for many the urban landscape becomes a cold, isolated place and the notion of community becomes symbolic of an unreal, idealized and somewhat extinct existence. As Anderson (quoted in Amit and Rapport) wrote: ‘it is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion’ (Amit and Rapport, 2002, Anderson, 1991/1983, p5-6).

Many people, if financially able to do so, choose to move out of the city to the country as their way of regaining a sense of community and the rural idyll for themselves and their children. Some may quote noise and pollution as their reasons for leaving, but for many it is a move away from multiculturalism, and the search for quintessential Englishness, and the re-establishment of English identity that encourages them to move. As Sarah Neal writes: ‘Pastoral images of England – rolling green fields, winding lanes, cream teas, chocolate box villages – have, historically and contemporarily, provided the corner-stones of a specific national identity’ (Neal, S, 2002, p443). Thus rural England supposedly provides respite from the dangers of the inner city. Others have gone further afield and moved to warmer European countries, America or Australia where there are historically strong links with the UK, and where immigration from Britain is being encouraged at this time.

In Barthian terms, the ebb and flow for many white community residents therefore, according to Amit and Rapport, appears to have broken down as communities have fragmented and moved out. For many immigrant populations living within the inner city, community for them

becomes the protected space against racism (as discussed by Bauman), and the ebb and flow is the maintenance mechanism which retains social relations and ethnic boundaries. The community of Romantown is heavily based on affiliation to faith and cultural groups and contrary to Amit and Rapport's observations on the breakdown of community within the inner city, groups in Romantown have collaborated against incursions from extremist white groups during the 1980s, and more recently combined strategies to deter asylum settlement in 2001 (discussed in Chapter Five).

Within the ethnically diverse community, ethnic relations *can* take on a less conflictive relationship. Richard Jenkins presented a postmodernist interpretation noting ethnic relationships were less hierarchical, and he quoted Banton as saying that: 'membership in an ethnic group is usually voluntary; membership in a racial group is not' (Jenkins, 2003, Banton, 1983, p10). Within communities like Romantown, ethnic difference can take on a less conflictive structure although there are definite ethnic hierarchies in existence (see Chapter Five).

For Pnina Werber, the ethnically diverse inner city became a place of activity and strength and she wrote: 'diaspora still manages to rise transcendent, united through heterogeneity, 'a shared space of dialogue', a context for an activism in which 'passive victims can become the imaginative agents of their own destiny' (Amit and Rapport, 2002, p48, Werbner, 1998, p27-28). She also wrote of the mistaken use of the term 'ghetto' as a connotation for 'urban decay and social malaise, stemming from multi-occupation, non ownership, and extreme poverty' to describe the ethnic inner city area (Werbner, 1990, p31). She described the Pakistani residential enclaves in contrast to this definition in Longsight in Manchester, as: 'an orderly neighbourhood of proud house owners, who spend a great deal of money and effort on

maintaining their homes, and have extensive sociability with their neighbours' (ibid). This would also cement notions of real not imagined community within Pakistani communities of Romantown and additionally the Highfields area of Leicester.

Richard Jenkins, however, brought external power sources into the equation, and said that certain groups may concur with external categorisation and may help that categorisation to stick (Jenkins, 2003). The general consensus surrounding asylum policy may thus bleed into the community and ultimately negatively affect dispersal in line with general rather than local thinking in this way. In Romantown, outside influences have attempted to create a rift between the Sikh and Pakistani communities in the wake of the World Trade Centre bombings. When carrying out a survey of host community responses to asylum seekers in Romantown, a local young Sikh man informed me that the British National Party (BNP) had tried to enlist members of the Sikh community in their (perceived) aim to alienate Muslim populations in Romantown (Richards, 2002). He saw the humour in this situation, in that two years previously it would have been his own community that the BNP would have been trying to alienate. My fieldwork seemed to suggest there are now some divisions between these two major groups in Romantown where bad press for Pakistani Muslims had created a schism, and for some, the trust was beginning to disappear (as discussed in Chapter Five). Also, it became apparent through statistical findings, interviews and focus group data that Sikh communities were more mobile generally and inclined to move out to leafier adjacent suburbs, where the Pakistani Muslim community tended to remain within Romantown and the adjacent inner city ward which another respondent (see Chapter Five) referred to as 'their patch'.

This particular immigrant settlement dynamic in Romantown presents a long practised atmosphere of coexistence with many of the immigrant residents being first, second and third

generation. These groups are well represented through their faith community associations. According to Arnstein's ladder of inclusion, they have managed to achieve good connections with powerful external agencies, and their level of inclusion at statutory agency meetings is high. They have real power in determining their own inclusiveness and that of others within the community (Khan, 2003, Arnstein, 1969). As Khan indicated, it is these levels of inclusiveness at agency level where everyone is kept informed, that can be vital in the avoidance of tension and misunderstanding (Khan, 2003). Asylum seekers being settled in Romantown needed to be aware of these dynamics and understand local hierarchies. Some asylum groups (namely Iranian Christian), who saw integration into the white community as their main priority, misunderstood the dynamics of Romantown where integration for some groups into the white community was not the main priority. The success and prosperity of Romantown, as an ethnically diverse community, may fall very heavily on the practiced coexistence of the two major ethnic groups of Pakistani Muslims and Indian Sikhs, both of whom class themselves as Punjabis (as discussed earlier). Although many other immigrant populations have arrived in Romantown, statistically it is these two groups that form its character, so there is no geographical connection with large numbers of Iraqi Kurd asylum seekers, for example, who are the most recently dispersed group of any size to Romantown. Tensions are already in existence between the Iraqi Kurd asylum seekers and these Punjabi residents.

It is also very easy to forget the majority white populations, within ethnically diverse communities, and the nature and relevance of boundaries surrounding this particular group (ONS, 2004). There have been observations within a recent report on citizenship and education, endorsed by Sir Keith Ajegbo, that show indigenous white children are experiencing identity issues in the curriculum in that they have negative perceptions of

UK/English identities (DfES, 2007). There is a real ambivalence here therefore. These insider/outsider white communities, which often include many post WWII immigrant groups from Europe, may have a more circumspect view of the cultural diversity which is in their own back yard. For them the difference between *us* and *them* and the *stranger* is much harder to define. This large sub-divided group may feel neglected by what they perceive to be their own kind, seeing a white government marginalise them in favour of their black and Asian minority ethnic neighbours, and findings from my own survey in Romantown substantiate this (Richards, 2002). As well as perceived marginalisation, there are elements of non-participation here from the majority of these residents, who may feel that any consultation is mere tokenism as far as they are concerned, and that they are simply observers as their community changes beyond recognition from predominantly white to ethnically diverse (Jenkins, 2003, Richards, 2002, Arnstein, 1969). Many of these residents still object to existing Asian communities and this negative opinion forms the strongest objections to new tranches of asylum seekers coming here (Richards, 2002).

To complete this section, it is necessary to comment on the position of community from the policy maker's perspective. It is hardly surprising, as we perceive the process of not only community disintegration but also the existence of strong vibrant ethnically diverse communities, that the ambivalence of 'community' has become a dominant site for policy makers (approached in Chapter One and explored further from a policy perspective in Chapter Three) (CIC, 2007). The contextualisation of community will also be discussed further in the penultimate section; but initially, to complete the theoretical explorations of community issues and to be able to introduce asylum seekers more into the discussion, this thesis requires the added interdisciplinary and more flexible dimensions of Stuart Hall's observations on the need for difference in our society (Hall, 1997).

Multiculture, difference and identity

Where a Barthian approach focuses us on the collective, it is important in understanding local dynamics to also analyse the individual. To this end, we can use Stuart Hall's work which broadens the discussion with an interdisciplinary approach to difference. It was Hall's concentration on 'new ethnicities' which sought to challenge the generally negative 'dominant regimes of representation' of black people, and create a counter positive position (Back, 1996, Hall, 1988, p27). However, Hall observed that the result of this was to homogenize blackness (Back, 1996), and so instead, sought to release ethnicity from its purely anthropological context and expand it to a local and global one through wider interdisciplinary study.

Hall provided us with the tools to examine difference and potentials for tension and posed the question: 'Why does difference matter?' and looked at reasons why there was still the need to establish difference within western society today (Hall, 1997, p234). He also incorporated the anthropological arguments of Bauman/Bateson, Douglas and Barth regarding the need for boundary markers and the categorisation of groups, as well as broadening the theoretical approach to include the linguistic, dialogic and psychologic need for humanity to categorise itself. The following discussion examines how these categorisations work within these extra theoretical dimensions and also within the spatial dimensions of Romantown. Discussions will focus more generally on how tensions may arise at points of difference and also particularly in Romantown, where the connotation and/or racialisation of the term *asylum seeker* may differ.

Hall took up the anthropological argument initially. The reinforcement of boundaries ties in with Bauman's observations on the placement of the stranger and withdrawal where marked positions of difference are established (Hall, 1997, Bauman, 1990, Lévi-Strauss, 1970, Douglas, 1966). Hall's examination here focused on the more negative points of difference;

namely, various discriminations where the site of difference became threatening, and aggression and hostility against the other created an ambivalent character of difference (Hall, 1997). Within Romantown however, the immigrant populations have already reciprocated by removing themselves to their allotted space, so the binary black/white here becomes less threatening where black predominates and the discourse surrounding racialisation has different connotations (ibid, Bauman, 1990).

The term 'black' also becomes increasingly fragmented in that Indian Sikhs and Pakistani Muslims, generally regarded as the subordinate side of the binary opposition black/white by people outside the community, predominate within Romantown. If asylum seekers are dispersed to a community where a majority religion is Muslim for example and they are also Muslim, they should be welcomed as they could be in a position to strengthen the predominant minority. Other factors may disrupt this thinking however. Although the tenets of Islam seek to normalise any difference or inequalities between Muslims, within the Pakistani Muslim community it is often *culture* and not religion which comes first in determining identity and any basis of welcome would be based on this (Werbner, 1990). For example, Werbner describes Manchester Pakistanis as still governed by their own caste system, and marriages would take place very much within that group, although the caste system per se is disapproved of within Islamic tenets. The purpose here is endogamy or the practice of not marrying outside the family group and is typical of Pakistanis in Romantown, although findings in Chapter Five suggest that the Pakistanis here generally disapprove of the more Hindu orientated caste system. As noted, these Pakistanis also have strong cultural ties with the Punjabi Sikhs, although they do not share a religion and the two groups do not generally intermarry. Iraqi Kurd asylum seekers would have no blood ties with either of these predominant groups and

therefore would be considered as outsiders, although both they and the Pakistanis are Sunni Muslim.

It is established therefore that difference will potentially take on particular cultural meanings; thus there is the potential for other points of difference to emerge. Certain minorities will form part of the dominant hierarchies within these communities. When new immigrant groups arrive, resident immigrant groups will take up a dominant position and the subordinate asylum seekers will be expected to take on a subordinate position (Bauman, 1990). The dominant will also be inclined to assign the subordinate to a negative rather than an ambiguous category thus mirroring the greater white community in this respect (Jenkins, 2003, Hall, 1997, Bauman, 1990, Douglas, 1966). Asylum seekers therefore could take on elements of reciprocity in that because of need they defer to the predominant group or groups, and remain within their own space within the community (Bauman, 1990, Douglas, 1966).

Hall's real contribution to this discussion is his interdisciplinary approach, which brings a more individual element to the discussion. Through the Saussurian argument, he argues that *linguistically* "‘difference’ matters because it is essential to meaning and without it meaning could not exist’ for us (Hall, 1997, p234). Here the form whether it be word, image, photo etc, may present an idea in our minds which associates us with the other, so we can talk about what *black* means because we can contrast with it as opposite from *white*, thus it is this difference that carries meaning. Again, problems arise when this meaning is situated where ambiguities exist and the position of the black/white binary becomes confused when the concept of ‘*Britishness*’ is less fixed (Gunaratnum, 2003, *ibid*, Douglas, 1966).

Tariq Modood's empirical studies for the Policy Studies Institute on *Britishness* among British Asians and British African Caribbeans, go far towards explaining priorities with regard to their identity (Modood et al, 1997, 1994). Modood found that many Asians coped very well with a duality of identity. However it is under this umbrella term 'Asian' that *Asianess* and *Britishness* may vary on a sliding scale within different cultures. Additionally, the insider view of identity may differ from an outsider view that just refers to people as 'black', 'white' or 'Asian'. This phenomenon was observed by Wallman (1986) who determined from her study of South Asians in Battersea, that dynamics of boundary markers differed from within and outside the community; and also observed by Robinson et al in Chapter One (Robinson et al, 2003). From within the more segregated elements of Romantown, there may be more similarities with asylum seekers new to Britain and indigenous Asian populations who primarily celebrate their own cultural heritage before any other (Modood et al, 1997, 1994).

Languages spoken within the community and how this presents a picture of difference, moves us forward to a dialogic approach, deriving from theories of language, to again question why difference matters. Hall expands with the explanation that 'we need 'difference' because we can only construct meaning through *dialogue* with the 'other'' (Hall, 1997, p235). He uses the Bahktinian argument that language (not as an objective system in the Saussurian sense), does not just belong to one speaker, but is constantly exchanged between different speakers and is always half someone else's, thus it becomes a product of negotiation with others (ibid). This concurs with Barth's and Jenkins' argument that the nature of boundaries surrounding groups cannot be formed in isolation, and it is the ebb and flow between groups that eventually characterises boundaries (Jenkins, 2003, Barth, 1969).

However, western British culture will always try to impose ideals of *Britishness* (policies on integration, citizenship tests, etc) through dominant discourses of government, the law and the media. The effect of this may be limited within partially segregated communities like Romantown, where ethnic white contests with predominant Punjabis and other cultures. Dialogic constructions of difference may not focus on similarities with the dominant white culture, but more on similarities with the predominant (yet still seen as minority) cultures within that particular community (again as found by Wallman in Battersea). The binary here between British passport holder and asylum seeker blurs for example, where many Sikh and Pakistani wives and husbands are still waiting for visas themselves (although their likelihood of getting one is greater), so their status is similar to that of an asylum seeker. Within Romantown, history of negotiation has also meant that dialogue is much more ordered and regulated, thus enforced familiarity through dialogue then comes into the equation (Chapter Six).

The final approach Hall used to examine difference comes from a psychological perspective. Here Hall focused mainly on the writings of Freud and Lacan with regard to the construction of the sexual self (Hall, 1997, Lacan, 1977, Freud, 1927). These theories also helpfully remove us from the group to study the individual. The construction of difference in our psychic life, where Hall argued that there is no such thing as a stable inner core to 'the self' or to identity, may point to difficulties in establishing harmonious relations with people such as asylum seekers who fit into negative nondescript categories (Hall, 1997). Hall quoted Frantz Fanon's use of psychoanalytic theory in his explanation of racism: 'that much racial stereotyping and violence arose from the refusal of the white 'other' to give recognition 'from the place of the other to the black person' (Hall, 1997, p238, Hall, 1996, Fanon, 1986, Bhabha, 1986a). It is this refusal to acknowledge the 'black/ethnic' immigrant as part of British culture that

removes us from the Barthian idyll of healthy coexistence and results in the negative marginalization and segregation of difference for immigrant groups within the inner city. Although black British citizens, through statute, are more protected now against institutionalised racism and assimilation policies were eventually disbanded, resultant asylum legislation for asylum seekers has ensured that through dispersal by NASS on a no choice basis, they again suffer from institutionalized racism and still remain vulnerable, separated and marginalised within communities (as discussed in Chapters One and Three). The contextualisation of the inner city in 'race' terms is examined in the following main section. Asylum seekers and residents do live on the same streets in Romantown and this has helped rather than hinder integration as is demonstrated in more detail in Chapter Five. So this would seem to breakdown the marginalised category of the asylum seeker somewhat as they have been able to become part of the community, although many still feel quite isolated.

The final section of this chapter moves away from resident dynamics within communities to the particular dynamics of governance and inclusion and is examined from a Foucauldian perspective. Before this however, the following section concentrates on the spatiality and contextualisation of multicultural and 'race' within the UK that provides a physical marker for difference. Communities like Romantown emerge from a climate of institutionalized racism, enforced and self regulated segregation and evolve into this present picture of urban multicultural. The recent dispersal of asylum seekers also takes its place in a time line of earlier immigrant settlement, policy practices and resultant racial tensions of the 1970/80/90s and the new millennium.

Multiculture, place and racism

Traditionally, since the end of World War II, it has been the decaying infrastructure of the ethnically diverse inner cities where migrants predominate that has prompted action and non action by successive governments, to produce the racialised space within our inner cities. Therefore some preparatory groundwork is needed, through localized research examples, to illuminate how racialised politics cemented racial inequality, and how this has become the bedrock of social unrest up to the present day.

The origins of racialised politics and institutionalized racism emanated from a racialised construction of *Britishness* that established itself during black immigration of the 1950s to the UK, and which: ‘excluded or included people on the grounds of race defined by colour’ (Solomos, 1989, p47, Harris, 1988). From attacks by whites on blacks in the 1958 race riots in Nottingham and Notting Hill, Parliament managed to turn the problem around to immigration, calling for the repatriation of ‘undesirable immigrants’ (Solomos, 1989, p48). The specifics of immigration and anti discrimination policy are dealt with more fully in the next chapter. The riots themselves were used as justification to impose controls on immigration and numerous debates took place in Parliament at this time with a Conservative government seeking to restrict immigration numbers (ibid, Layton-Henry, 1984, Reeves, 1983). This was countered by the Labour and Liberal parties, which were generally against controls, although New Labour has since introduced restrictive asylum legislation to perform the same function (Solomos, 1989). There was also widespread coverage of debates by the media which played its role in moulding popular opinion on issues of black immigration by blaming black people for bleeding the benefits system dry, something which is very much in line with current populist media discourses on asylum seekers (*The Times*, 3 September, 1958 via Solomos, 1989).

It was also at this time that coded racialised language was being introduced through Parliament and black immigrants referred to as ‘commonwealth immigrants’, were perceived as the problem rather than a direct attribution to ‘race’ being an issue (Solomos, 1989). It is the local politics of racism and the translation of central politics to a local agenda that deals with the specifics of ‘race’ and how this was dealt with via local policy interventions and which fostered the academic study of urban politics which this next section seeks to capture.

In some instances, new housing initiatives that aimed to improve communities had in fact destroyed them. For example, Tower Hamlets in London saw slum clearance resulting in the building of high rise flats. In other areas, instead of slum clearance, dilatory local authorities had allowed existing Victorian housing stock in Brixton and Birmingham for example, to become multi occupied slums (Back, 1996, Richmond, 1973, Rex and Moore, 1967). In the forward to John Rex’s study of Sparkbrook in Birmingham, E J B Rose, the then Director, Survey of Race Relations in Britain, described certain areas of Birmingham as: ‘areas which, in the words of the authors, have not yet reached the night of slumdom and are aptly called twilight zones, a term which has come to be applied not only to a certain type of housing but to a type of tenure, multi-occupation, which prevails within areas of immigrant settlement’ (Rex and Moore, 1967, forward v). Rose continued that it was the lack of social housing in areas such as Sparkbrook, where policy makers abandoned new immigrants to the mercy of the exploitative landlords, which in turn created tensions. Later studies in Handsworth by Rex and Tomlinson, sought to analyse the social position of Asian and West Indian people and how these groups interacted with local political institutions, that provided the bedrock for community engagement as discussed in the last section and Chapter Six (Solomos, 1989, Rex and Tomlinson, 1979).

Rex's observations on the fundamental differences between white, West Indian and Asian communities in Birmingham have also provided a good grounding for the understanding of ethnic difference generally (Rex, 1988). Solomos (1989) quoted other studies of importance in Nottingham, Birmingham and Bristol since the 1950s: Nicholas Deakin, David Beetham, Ken Newton and Ira Katznelson, (also Richmond in Bristol) (Newton, 1976 and Katznelson, 1976, Richmond, 1973, Deakin, 1972, Beetham, 1970); and in the 1980s, Gideon Ben-Tovim in Liverpool and Wolverhampton, and Anthony Messina in Ealing (Ben-Tovim et al, 1986, Messina, 1985). More recent urban studies on refugees and asylum seekers are discussed in Chapters Three and Four. My own work on race relations, with a particular focus on asylum seekers, follows in these traditions through entering particular localities to investigate community and agency dynamics.

Most recently, inner city poverty has fuelled inter minority ethnic hostilities. For instance in 2005, in the ethnically diverse Lozells district of Birmingham, drug and gun crime between rival Asian and African Caribbean gangs are alleged to have sparked tensions (BBC, 23 October, 2005). Accusations of abandonment to social deprivation were thrown at policy makers and police by immigrant residents when tensions erupted into riots in Bradford in 2001. Recent observations by Cantle et al, on the inadvisability of segregated community living arose from these riots, although much has been written about segregation of ethnic minorities within the inner city (explored further in Chapter One) (Cantle et al, 2001, Rex, 1981, Peach, Robinson and Smith, 1981). Rises in unemployment and increased deprivation generally in this particular area from the 1980s onwards, had resulted in inner city residents being moved to new council housing estates in the suburbs which had been built to assuage the poverty of the inner city. Many Pakistani, Bangladeshi and African Caribbeans 'chose' to remain within inner city areas whilst their white neighbours moved out, because many white

residents had made it clear to them that they did not want their immigrant neighbours to move with them (Cantle, 2004, Parekh, 2000). These white migrations to new housing estates, rather than solving problems, fostered multiple deprivation and social exclusion elsewhere. Lines of demarcation between white and ethnic communities became marked along racial rather than socio economic lines. Parekh's advocacy therefore of 'widening and deepening liberal integrationism to offer more room for public diversity in the public arena', seemed to fail somewhat in these segregated northern communities and moved far away from a dream of prosperity, aligned with expansionism, where ethnic boundaries ceased to have such a negative significance (Vertovec, 2005, Grillo, 2005, p11, Parekh, 2000, p172).

The removal of decaying housing stock in London, where steps had been taken to rectify slumdom from the 1920s onwards (culminating in the building of new high rise council flats in the 1960s in Tower Hamlets), had done little to improve communities, and many would say had turned the areas into heartless multicultural ghettos (Back, 1996). Back describes the building of these tower blocks in Tower Hamlets as the ruination of urban dockland neighbourhoods, which created new problems in this multi-ethnic landscape that had 'no go' areas for both white and black residents (ibid). Unlike Tower Hamlets, in areas like Brixton, much of the Victorian housing stock remained, some being bought by West Indian immigrants who in turn rented out to new immigrants coming in (ibid). Within the last ten years, income has generally risen in Brixton due to its proximity to the City of London. Young people from lucrative white collar professions have moved into renovated social housing stock that Lambeth Council has sold off to property developers (Brixton Guide, 23 February 2003). However, this has led to complaints from long-term local residents who see their social housing being sold off for vast profits; this in turn forces them into sub-standard private rented accommodation (ibid). A catalogue of mismanagement by policy makers seems to account for

the eruption of tensions and problems listed here, and people from migrant communities again have become trapped within the lower stratum of existence. Historically, the only way out of this has been to take action themselves. This has in turn, resulted in prescriptive policing where as recently as 2003, young Asian men in Bradford were receiving five year sentences for being present at a riot.

Policy changes have sought to rectify the dilapidation of the inner city by injecting large infusions of regeneration money and Romantown has benefitted from this type of investment. Within six months of my moving into a terraced house in Romantown nearly ten years ago, I have become the beneficiary of extensive works, carried out on a means tested basis, to improve my property. In 2004, the Home Zone initiative was introduced to improve the overall appearance of the streets and slow down traffic. This coupled with Community Safety Partnerships to reduce drugs and crime and the latest community deregulation agendas from the Department of Communities and Local Government (late of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister) which promotes resident participation on local issues as such as community conflict, extremism, deprivation and disadvantage; are all measures designed to combat inner city problems. The White Paper, 'Strong and prosperous communities' (October, 2006) is designed to empower residents to improve their communities, with much of the funding being devolved to local councils to administer (Communities and Local Government, 2006). This shift of emphasis from central to local government forms part of the government's Local Cohesion Agenda and the competence of communities to engage with this are discussed in the next section with brief references to Romantown. Discussions here seek to leave behind the dilapidation of the inner city with its associated problems and instead investigate the possibilities for community competence in governance (in Romantown) from a Foucauldian perspective.

Governance, Social Management and Multiculture

In this final section, I will attempt to create a definition of ethnically diverse community involvement; where community governance as policy initiative seeks to work locally with community residents to address problems surrounding marginalization, social tension, inclusion/exclusion and, in this instance, asylum dispersal. This will be managed through Foucauldian understanding of racism, coupled with Foucauldian concepts of power and knowledge, where more participatory governance arrangements (prompted by government) creates a shift from the public to the personal domains to avail itself of knowledge of cultures, faith and identity (Newman, 2007, Swyngedouw, 2005, Miller and Rose, 2001/1988, Carter, 1997, Foucault, 1980f). However, as government in the pursuit of knowledge reaches out into the public domain, it will court opposition in return. Foucault, instead of regarding power in the hands of government as oppressive, said that it produced an agonistic relationship in which ‘power operates to overcome resistance whilst resistance prompts a more intense exercise of power’ in return (Carter, 1997, p132, Wright, 1994, Foucault, 1982, p221, Gordon 1980, Foucault, 1980f). In ideal terms, inter agency governance provides the hub where the process of interaction and negotiation takes place and can be the foundation for competent communities to build upon (Wright, 1994). To compliment Foucault’s writings, Susan Wright’s observations on the mechanics of community governance refer to competence and compliance as ‘(competence) the ability of clients to understand the bureaucratic system and activate it in an appropriate way in pursuit of their rights and interests. Compliance refers to passive acceptance of the behaviour required by the organisation’ (ibid, p161). It is the concept of a competent community that is being presented here.

The core of this section focuses on the position of ethnic minorities within the confines of localities like Romantown; the negative associations of marginalisation and disaffection that

accompany that placement; and their ability, together with complementing NGOs, to consult on issues pertaining to asylum settlement within Romantown. Using Foucauldian ideas of negotiation and empowerment, ideas are presented in which local residents, refugees and asylum seekers, supporting voluntary agencies and RCOs can negotiate positively with local government (which is tested out for analysis in Chapter Six). This approach moves away from the essentialist/reductionist views in which power remains fixed within hierarchical structures, to a much more fluid position where it is possible to challenge what is seen as only repressive orthodox juridical-sovereign views of power which travel in one direction and always from the top down. Foucault's writings move us away from the idea that power is: 'held by somebody and denied to others' (Carter, 1997, p132, Foucault, 1980f, p156), and sees the determination of power as not fixed, but 'locked in a symbiotic relationship of power and resistance' for a power that is omnipresent and 'a machinery that no-one owns', therefore free to be negotiated for (ibid).

Foucault does not deny that power in the hands of powerful agencies such as the government, the law and the media will have the ability to sway public opinion and skew knowledge, thus creating other realities. An example here would be the media that will claim to and try to establish 'the truth' about 'ethnically diverse communities' and 'asylum seekers', so that alternative versions seem ridiculous and have little social impact (examples of this in Romantown are given in Chapter Five). Foucault goes on to say that the discourses tied into power relations are: 'temporally and spatially relative... and are the product of particular, historically contingent 'regimes of truth'' (Carter, 1997, p142-143). Therefore agency dynamics within communities like Romantown can challenge norms. Thus, for Foucault, racism that denies 'our capacity to be otherwise than we are', becomes a legitimate site in which the population order, discipline and regulate themselves, and it is the success or failure

of these governance dynamics that determine whether a community is competent in its ability to tackle officialdom or compliant by looking passively on (Carter 1997, p144, Wright, 1994, Owen, 1994, p207).

Government's ability to manage however has to be based on knowledge and the ability to reach out to any number of organizations in order to understand the mechanics of local or individual needs. In its attempt to remove itself from a position of omnipresence where the flexing of power will result in increased opposition, it must reach into communities/individuals' lives to achieve its socio political objectives. Miller and Rose speak of this collective approach to manage the treatment of mental health via the Tavistock Clinic that acted as an information hub for individuals and agencies alike. The clinic promoted a system in which diagnosis and treatment was based on the collection of knowledge of the individual from other spheres of the patient's life, ie GP, hospital, school and the courts (Miller and Rose, 2001, 1988). However, this type of collective thinking does not always flow easily when government is trying to promote the idea of the liberal public sphere. As Janet Newman writes, it needs to be managed in a way that: 'neither essentialises differences (as in many public participation strategies), or strip them of the politics through which differential claims have been made (as in 'assimilationist' approaches to social cohesion)' (Newman, 2007, p14). She also identifies capabilities of dealing with hard cases: 'such as questions of culture and identity, equality and difference, claims for recognition and redistribution – by fostering public debate and enlarging the spaces in which deliberation takes place, both within and across lines of difference' (ibid). Therefore, in times of difficulty, when government has to probe inwards to acquire its knowledge on issues such as social cohesion, asylum working across these multi agency dynamics becomes problematic when an exertion of too much power provides too much resistance.

Central/local government policy formations

The process of governance becomes a main focus for attention when, as discussed in Chapter One, within areas of multicultural, 'race', inclusion and cohesion, statutory sectors are now placed in a position of being expected to access hard to reach groups. Social cohesion is now the main focus of the Community Cohesion Agenda and was initially put forward by the (previous) Communities Secretary Ruth Kelly with a focus 'to counter tensions between people of different ethnic groups and religions' (BBC News, 24 August, 2006). The emphasis here is on integration and reconciliation to life in Britain rather than self segregation and retreat away from it, and she targets certain immigrant populations to engage by saying: 'the challenges of integration become more apparent to those who have settled here....second and third generation immigrants can face a struggle not to adapt to life in the UK – but to reconcile their own values and beliefs with those of their parents and grandparents' (ibid). Within this speech lie the fears echoed by Trevor Phillips and Ted Cante (et al) on self segregation and parallel living which became the main hurdle for her new ministry to address (BBC, 2006, Phillips, 2005, Cante et al, 2003).

It is also part of the social cohesion agenda to devolve more responsibility to local authorities as previously stated. The Lyons Inquiry into Local Government refers to this as 'place shaping', where local government takes greater responsibility for the well-being of an area and the people who live there, in attempts to bring about increased satisfaction from local residents and build more prosperous communities (Lyons Inquiry, 2006). It is the local Community Safety Partnerships that will become increasingly innovative when reaching out to hard to reach communities that have spent many decades fostering self interest within their particular faith communities and acquiring the skills and confidence to engage with managing agencies on issues of local importance (Lowndes and Chapman, 2005, Wright, 1994).

The needs of ethnic minorities were often misunderstood originally by the white agencies through neglect, language difficulties, and rigid application to government rules that were not flexible enough to cater for their ethnic minority clients (Gumperz, 1982). However the Home Office is coming to understand the importance of faith group involvement in civil renewal and is seeking to formulate models in which they would be included in decision making processes for local service provision (Lowndes and Chapman, 2005). Here pointers towards the full local understanding of faith communities and promotion of diversity within the policy making process is deemed essential for community cohesion and faith community involvement (ibid). Additionally, the importance of strong civic participation by faith communities has been flagged by the Home Office Citizenship Survey and a survey in Greater London identified more than 2000 faith based projects in the city (ibid, Home Office, 2003).

In Foucauldian terms, as well as being situational, power has a repressive and productive function; repressive in that negotiation can be seen as being agency led, but productive in that consultation takes place as a matter of historical action between the two predominant groups of Pakistani Muslims and Punjabi Sikhs that live in Romantown, for example. Time old methods of negotiation have to be acknowledged by the managing agencies, and the possibilities understood of how these methods of negotiation can be adapted to new asylum groups settling in the locality. The Barthian concept will also apply here where history of immigration to Romantown will play a part and where agency management of ethnic diversity has been a dominant feature over many years. Here again we can return to the Punjabi Sikh and Pakistani's place of origin in which traditional ways of sharing problems are continued within the new place of settlement in the UK. Anthropological analogies can also be drawn to the balance that had to be created between the Australian administration of Papua New Guinea and the indigenous wantok system through which western administration had to work with

traditional systems of management (Wright, 1994, Nicholson, 1994). Again, the demographics of Romantown are grounded within the UK not Papua New Guinea or the Indian/Pakistani borders; thus agencies and groups negotiate within a UK British setting and the *tok tok* (talk) itself takes place at a number of levels (see Fig 2). The ebb and flow continues between agencies and ethnic groups, interaction takes place, but boundaries remain intact (Jenkins 2003, Barth, 1969).

Devolved community governance means that NGOs are encouraged to take over tasks and this creates possibilities for both conflict and competence. The most recent charity to be given recognition in Romantown is the Eastern European Migrants Association, formed for the newly acceded migrant workers coming to Romantown and the outlying area for work (Denton Refugee Forum, September 2007). Sending and Neuman perceived the role of the NGO as: 'non state actors' responsible for 'changing logic or rationality of government (defined in Foucauldian terms as a type of power) by which civil society is redefined from a passive object of government to be acted upon into an entity that is both an object *and* a subject of government' (Sending and Neumann, 2006, p651). The power of the voluntary sector can thus be quite formidable and organisations such as the Community Voluntary Services become a protective umbrella for smaller projects. This again aids the negotiating process and helps to shoulder the funding burden. It is certain that over the last two decades, where urban unrest in Britain's inner cities has brought about policy changes, government has been forced into a position of having to mediate and negotiate with individuals and voluntary sector agencies rather than dictate to society in order to bring about change (Solomos, 1989).

Because of the significant growth in the voluntary sector, there are now occasions when clarity over respective roles has provided safeguards when dealing with issues like asylum in

Romantown (Khan, 2003). Khan provided examples from another national context, where inter-agency squabbles existed between the Canadian police and NGO agencies over the heavy handed treatment of young asylum seekers. Khan observed how conflict between agencies need not necessarily be destructive and said that coordination, where agencies work independently but acknowledge each others roles, taking measures to avoid duplication, helps to manage conflict where it may ordinarily exist. Again, the Barthian prescription for ebb and flow maintains a healthy coexistence where cooperation occurs, where funding is limited, and duplication regarded as wasteful, or where there are limitations imposed on agencies by government and funders (Barth, 1969). Examples of this are where agencies generally have shared objectives, eg avoiding racial discrimination, and/or in this case, managing asylum issues. It is the complementarities of these relationships that manage situations in which the statutory and voluntary agencies combine to provide an overall service which individually they cannot (as recognized by the local council in Romantown) (Asylum Seeker Statutory Multi Agency Forum, November 2003).

Local council and voluntary agency remits may differ, but safeguards are in place when a broader service can provide for failed asylum seekers (approached in Chapter Six). Although there is an understanding of cooperation here however, the voluntary agency may perceive the council as having failed in its duty, so the division between the agencies still exists. Again Barthian analogies apply when the ebb and flow between agencies maintain a healthy coexistence between the statutory and voluntary sectors, and where agencies meet to discuss the common problem of dispersal at both statutory and voluntary forums, and then return to their respective sectors (Jenkins 2003, Barth, 1969). There are also common bonds where mutual mistrust of the Home Office (NASS) may encourage collaboration between the local statutory and voluntary sectors, and where both have suffered at the heavy handedness of

central government when dealing with the asylum issues at a local level. Thus it is here that the traditional division between the statutory and voluntary sectors again finds common ground.

Refugee and asylum groups (fairly recent immigrants to Romantown) are inheriting faith community involvement in local issues of civil renewal and their own participation is determining their futures. For example, RCOs follow the combined efforts of the Punjabi Sikh and Pakistani communities in Romantown that took local government to task over employment issues in the 1980s; with both communities having founder memberships on the local Racial Equality Council (DREC, 1987/88). It is the role of governance of RCOs that Roger Zetter et al focused on in their latest publication *Refugee Community Organisations and Dispersal* (2005), where they said: ‘the positive role of RCOs for the integration of refugees is a dominant assumption in the literature, but one that is more often asserted than fully demonstrated. On one level, there is indeed strong evidence in the literature to suggest that RCOs make a vital contribution in meeting the welfare needs of their communities...By assisting asylum seekers and refugees to understand the welfare systems they are also acting, in a sense, to integrate them into the patterned relationships of the receiving society’ (Zetter et al, 2005, p200). However Zetter et al also pointed to the RCOs’ inability to fulfil tasks placed on them by statutory (and voluntary) agencies because of lack of infrastructure within organisations and serious lack of funding (ibid). The activity of the Refugee Forum in Romantown acts as the hub for refugee and asylum community associations and it is from here that these associations are supposedly able to link into a cross section of agencies from both the statutory and voluntary sectors (Fig 2). RCOs however are retreating from this public sphere, and agencies from both sectors now have to work much harder to access them. From a Foucauldian perspective, knowledge can be shared at the Forum (Miller and Rose, 2001,

1988), but RCOs are exerting power by retreating away from engagement as managing agencies probe inwards (Carter, 1997, Foucault, 1980f) (investigated further in Chapter Six).

Investigations into communities like Romantown provide excellent opportunities to extract rich data in order for the researcher to understand the nature of conducive, multicultural living. ‘Governance’ signifies inclusion here and terms such as community cohesion, capacity building, and *together we can*, give the impression that contribution from residents plays an equally important part, although competent Romantown residents can and will retreat to their own informal networks if engagement is not in their interest. Initiatives that incorporate local government agreements, neighbourhood teams, neighbourhood forums, community police support officers, community champions and community funding, seek to achieve devolution to an increasingly local level, which in turn links into local and other universities where the intellectual concentration continues. Asylum groups entering Romantown also become part of, and to a certain extent inherit, a responsibility for its governance and upkeep at this increasingly fragmented level.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented a review of the theoretical literature that will provide the tools for the study of findings on the dispersal of asylum seekers to Romantown in Chapters Five and Six.

Initially, Zygmunt Bauman helped to establish the notion of the stranger and the process of withdrawal where the formation of ethnically diverse communities was the result. Through

this process it was established that there existed the possibility for the acceptance of asylum seekers within these communities through reciprocation by ethnic minority residents in order to retain this allotted space. There are certainly examples in Chapter Five, where Sikhs and, to a lesser extent, Pakistani residents were willing to meet with asylum groups, albeit through official channels and so there are clear instances of reciprocation here.

The Barthian analogy, based on similarities to his original Pathan studies on ethnic boundaries, presented the potential for a healthy coexistence framework for ethnic minority residents in Romantown. Chapter Five proceeds from here to examine the extent to which original minority ethnic elements of community still connect and exist in Romantown, as some settlers have moved to other parts of the city. There are indications that strong connections between Pakistanis and Sikhs are now weakening as the ebb and flow between them decreases. Changing dynamics also question the implications for this where new groups of asylum seekers do not have the cultural bond of these original settlers.

The problematisation of ‘community’ as a concept is also explored within this first section. Amit and Rapport’s writings of imagined community were used to examine where traditional white British and ethnic elements of community had broken down, as people had moved away in pursuit of quintessential *Britishness*, and left the increasingly multicultural inner city behind. Theoretically this created an opportunity to present Romantown as a strong vibrant place where there exists a real and imagined community for minority ethnic residents and asylum seekers.

Where theory provides a basis for the study of community, a broader examination of difference is required to determine tension points from all aspects of community to include asylum seekers. Hall’s writings on difference, aids investigations at an increasingly

fragmented level, and asylum seekers are more easily incorporated into this theoretical discussion. There is also a sizeable section in Chapter Five on the effects that national and local media has in prolonging adverse local opinion on asylum that questions the effect that powerful mainstream discourses have in Romantown.

The section on multicultural, place and racism contextualizes inner city tensions and highlights incidences where research has illuminated policy failures. Areas like Romantown have benefitted from large sums of regeneration money, and Chapters Five and Six present aspects of Romantown as a place of opportunity for all its community residents including asylum seekers.

In the wake of the previous section, the concept of multiculturalism remains problematic, and integration and cohesion now looms large on government agendas where ethnic minority residents and refugees and asylum seekers are being focused on by the statutory agencies. The final section examines the workings of community governance from a Foucauldian perspective, which revolves around access by managing agencies but also resistance from the local communities. In Chapter Six, although there are real elements of competence displayed from all agency sectors within Romantown, there is also potential for community embargoes from refugee and asylum residents where lack of funding removes the desire for them to engage.

Chapter Three now provides an evolutionary picture of immigration and asylum policy through a review of policy literature in this area which will complement the theoretical literature presented here. As theoretically demonstrated above, this review will provide the tools to study findings from Chapters Five and Six within a policy context

Chapter 3

Literature review of policy on immigration and asylum

Introduction

This chapter forms the second of two literature review chapters, but this time focuses on immigration, asylum and dispersal as specific policy measures. Refugee and asylum seeking is placed here within a policy context of immigration to the UK generally, and the literature seeks to demonstrate how policy measures have been instrumental in attempting to control and manage immigration and latterly asylum seekers in particular.

This chapter primarily brings asylum policy into context, and the long history of immigration into the UK is discussed as dispersal becomes a policy measure in its own right. This section discusses the processes of racialisation and restrictive policy practices aimed at black immigrant groups and the naissance of dispersal policies of immigrants and refugees, to counter what was perceived as the inadvisability of clustering within the UK inner city.

The chapter then examines asylum legislation developments under the New Labour Government that came to power in 1997 and its emphasis is on a managed migration system aligned to economic need, which aims to deter rather than encourage asylum seekers. Legislation focuses on what is considered a ‘firm but fair’ system designed to expedite applications but also fulfill humanitarian obligations. However, humanitarian organisations and academics in this area generally are highly critical of what they see as increasingly punitive measures that seek to control and restrict asylum seekers through deportations, detentions and controlled dispersal (via the 1999 Act) and critique their effectiveness. More

humanitarian forms of dispersal are advocated by the Audit Commission which allows for clustering within ethnically diverse communities to provide solutions to avoid tension building in local communities.

The final section of this chapter concentrates on the localised impact of asylum dispersal, involving discussions of research work in this area. There is a brief introduction to Romantown which links in to work already done here.

History of immigration policy in the UK: 1850-1989

As asylum seekers form the latest tranche of immigrants to arrive in the UK, it is well to remember that Britain has been the destination country for many migrants for over a thousand years. This section therefore, will not only briefly examine the evolution of migration to the UK since the 19th century, but will also introduce ideas around the politicization of ‘race’ and immigration via government and the media, in preparation for the next section which focuses specifically on the evolution of asylum policy (Castles and Davidson, 2000, Solomos, 1989). This section seeks to draw analogies between immigrant restrictionist measures, imposed predominantly from the 1970s onwards, and the similarities in tone to those being imposed now on asylum seekers.

Irish and Jewish Migration to Britain

The racialisation of immigrants began with the migration of Jews from Eastern Europe to the UK from the 1870s onwards. Irish settlers had also come to Britain at that time to satisfy the need for labour (Solomos, 1989). Although restrictive statutory measures were taken to limit immigrations of black and Jewish settlers to the UK, there was little done to regulate Irish immigration; this in part being as a result of the Act of Union of 1800 which incorporated Ireland into the United Kingdom, although this special relationship continued after the formation of the Republic of Ireland in 1922 and still remains today (ibid). Irish workers still suffered from discrimination however and were commonly thought of as biologically inferior, which led to tensions and violence in cities like Liverpool where there were was a high density of Irish settlement (ibid, Holmes, 1988).

Between 1870 and 1914, 120,000 Jewish settlers migrated to Britain, and by 1914, Jewish people living in Britain had risen to 300,000 (Solomos, 1989, Pollins, 1982, Gartner, 1973). Poor conditions and unemployment in the East End of London where a majority of these Jews settled, resulted in trade union agitation for immigration controls (Solomos, 1989). The racialisation of immigration from this point was thus becoming linked with social problems and the perceived ghettoisation by Jewish settlers in particular areas in London. Although the immigrant Jewish community was smaller than the immigrant Irish community settlement, it was this migration that prompted ensuing political debates on immigration control and which culminated in the Aliens Act of 1905. Although, on the surface, the Act seemed to take a rather pragmatic approach where particular groups designated ‘undesirable’ were targeted for expulsion ie lunatics, paupers, vagrants and prostitutes, this Act, as the title suggests, sought to exclude by determining who should come into Britain and who should not. The Act also gave

powers to expel non-British citizens if they were found to be destitute or living in insanitary conditions. However, the Act did allow for anybody looking to migrate to the UK or seeking political asylum to be admitted, as long as they did not belong to one of the quoted undesirable categories. There was also provision to appeal against expulsion to an Immigration Board, so there were productive as well as restrictive elements.

The Aliens Restriction Act passed quickly through Parliament at the outbreak of WWI in 1914. It presented government with real powers based around national security and varying degrees of residencies were introduced for the first time, which allowed stipulated movement for immigrants to be incorporated, in that residency and travelling restrictions were imposed (Solomos, 1989). Various statutes were brought in between the two World Wars where there were increasing numbers of Jewish refugees fleeing oppressive regimes within Europe. Restrictive elements in the Acts sought to balance limited resources for increased immigration against a humanitarian need to aid people fleeing persecution. This was tempered by rising anti-Semitism within British society, which amounted ultimately to a restriction of numbers being allowed in at that time (ibid, Sherman, 1973).

New Commonwealth immigration

It is black New Commonwealth migration to Britain post World War II from the Caribbean and the Indian sub continent however, that accelerated political debate fed by increasingly negative public opinion on mass immigration, and academic criticism of what was seen to be increasingly punitive measures amounting to selective immigration processes. Initially, numbers from this group migrating to Britain between the world wars had been small, although there had been incidences of racist violence and discriminatory and restrictive

practices. Statutes were introduced (Alien Restriction (Amendment) Act 1919) that allowed for different rates of pay to be paid to British subjects from the British Empire, according to their race. Post 1918 when there was a slump in the shipping industry, trade unions attempted to restrict employment of seamen to white British subjects and Indian seamen already here were being persuaded to return home (Solomos, 1989, Joshua et al, 1983). There was also racist violence at this time towards Indians and West Indians in Cardiff, Liverpool and Glasgow which resulted in specific reference to *coloured* alien seamen (Special Restrictions (Coloured Alien Seamen) Order 1925) where automatic rights of settlement were removed and black people were marked out as different and were required to register with the police on arrival at port (ibid, Rich, 1986, Jenkinson, 1985, Gordon, 1985, Evans, 1985, 1980, Joshua et al, 1983, May and Cohen, 1974, Hepple, 1968). Restrictive policy measures on black immigration were now coming into direct confrontation however with the need for labour post WWII. Although European immigrant labour was not perceived to be a problem at this time, black immigrant labour was (Solomos, 1989). It was during this period up till the early 1960s, that the politicization of 'race' through public debate in Parliament and the media (where opposition to rights of entry for black commonwealth immigrants through the 1948 British Nationality Act was being aired) came into being (ibid).

As with asylum statutes 40 years later, government at that time was attempting to impose punitive restrictions on particular people who had rights to be here, whether as a citizen of the British Empire who had a right to enter Britain, or as signatory to the 1951 Geneva Convention through which Britain was expected to give sanctuary to people fleeing persecution. Then as now, regulation was imposed as a result of racial tensions and a perceived threat by the British public that black immigration (and uncontrolled numbers of asylum seekers) was 'a possible threat to the British way of life' (Solomos, 1989, p39). The

media was also becoming a powerful tool in spreading fears regarding the inadvisability of black immigration and publicly indulging in political debate of the issue.

Process of racialisation, the media and the emergence of racialised politics in the UK

Until 1945, it was the three main categorizations of migrant; Irish, Jewish and colonial/New Commonwealth that formed and directed policy. However, as can be seen, the catalyst for restrictive measures seemed to come from Jewish and black immigration rather than the Irish who were not subjected to the statutory exclusion and control of their black and Jewish counterparts. It was these exclusionary policies that set the scene for the next barrage of restrictive statutes as immigration from the West Indies, India and the newly formed Pakistan increased in volume post 1945 (ibid). Restrictive policy measures at that time were targeted at comparatively small numbers of Asian and African Caribbean immigrants and became the subject of increased attention by researchers writing on race politics (ibid, Layton-Henry, 1984, Freeman, 1979, Katznelson, 1976). Ultimately academic thinking concluded that lack of debate surrounding other immigrant settlements during this post WWII period clearly meant that opposition was generally aimed more towards black immigration (ibid, Miles and Phizacklea, 1984, Macdonald, 1983, Sivanandan, 1982). Race riots in Nottingham and Notting Hill both in 1958 (caused by local white residents attacking black residents) resulted in a concentrated policy effort to reduce numbers of black workers by controlling the free entry principle brought in under the Nationality Act of 1948. The Commonwealth Immigration Bill was introduced in 1961 and finally the Act in 1962 to specifically control black immigration by introducing selective procedures, although this was with some reticence as it caused embarrassment to Britain as Head of the Commonwealth (ibid, Rich, 1986, Joshi and Carter, 1984).

It was the introduction of the British Nationality Act of 1948, in response to the granting of independence to India that seemed to cement the legal right of black British subjects from the colonies and the emerging Commonwealth to enter and settle in Britain. However, the subsequent arrival of large numbers of black British passport holders from the West Indies was soon generally perceived to be a problem, and again measures were taken by successive Labour and Conservative governments to curb numbers (ibid, Carter, Harris and Joshi, 1987, Dean, 1987, Bevan, 1986, Joshi and Carter, 1984, Evans, 1983). It was during the period 1945-62 that debate, focussing specifically on coloured immigration, became embedded within policy. This in turn allowed dilatory administrative practices to deter black immigration and enabled racist discussion, again with the assistance of the media, to filter down into common parlance (Solomos, 1989).

Anti discrimination legislation from the 1960s onwards

Up until the end of the 1970s, legislation had concentrated mainly on restricting numbers of black immigrants coming into Britain. It was Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Government of 1979 that took on elements of Enoch Powell's repatriation speeches in the *Birmingham Post* in 1968, and began to focus on the black communities already settled here (*Birmingham Post*, 22 April, 1968). Although past legislation had seemed punitive and restrictive and also responsible for singling out colour as a mark of difference, it had been counter legislation in the form of the Race Relations Acts of 1965, 1968 and 1976 (which allowed for the creation of the Race Equality Council (REC) and the Race Relations Board) that had been put through Parliament to counter the more extreme effects of discrimination, although Solomos argued that policy was aimed more towards social order and integration rather than anti discrimination (Solomos, 1989).

The damage, to a certain extent, had been done however, and young blacks born and living in Britain were now seen as an alienated group (Solomos, 1989, 1988,). Echoes of Powell's words to include now 'the enemy within' with the public focus pointing towards crime and disorder in the inner city (incidences of which were highlighted in the previous chapter), and Powell's continued call for repatriation as the only solution well into the 1980s, ensured the continued racialisation of black immigrants to Britain (Solomos, 1989). The Labour Party (although up to this time complicit with the Conservatives in introducing and maintaining restrictive legislation, at a time when Margaret Thatcher was ignoring the possibility of introducing any constructive amendments to the Race Relations Act) was promising that any future administration of theirs would ensure controls were fairly distributed across *all* rather than only *black* immigrants. In fact, as early as the 1950s, working parties had been set up by the Labour Party to look at the question of discrimination against black immigrants, with a view to combating discrimination and assuaging any potential future tensions. Also within the party, after the worst of the 1980s riots, strong anti-racist lobbies were pushing Labour into commitments to implement reforms (ibid, Fitzgerald and Layton-Henry, 1986). Models of integration began with the passage of the Race Relations Acts, and the setting up of the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), providing limited redress to the courts for decisions on racist practices (Solomos, 1989).

Although the Labour Party was now committed to anti discrimination politics and the CRE was tackling some elements of racial discrimination (although reiterating Solomos' views here that Labour's main concern was social order rather than social justice), it was a Conservative government that was in power by the end of the 1970s. Policy developments such as section 71 of the Race Relations Act of 1976 made it incumbent upon local authorities to eliminate unlawful racial discriminatory practices (Solomos, 1989). This presented possibilities for

strident localised politics to develop (via locally held Labour councils and minority pressure group organisations) to counter the Thatcher years of monetarist policies and slashed public funding. Although local ethnic minority residents were now able to liaise with local government on issues of race, employment, health and education, the unemployment of more than 3 million people and reactionary policing practices led to a spate of race riots in the 1980s. By the time the Labour Party returned to power in 1997, it was asylum in particular that was now the public focus of the immigration debate (discussed in more depth in the next section).

Early dispersal policies and black and minority ethnic groups in the UK

Although clustering of Jewish migrants in the East End of London at the beginning of the 20th century had raised some concerns, it was the scale of the migration and the propensity for black and minority ethnic immigrants to cluster around the centres of major British cities in large numbers that prompted a political and policy concern in the early 1960s (Robinson et al, 2003). In response, the then Minister for Education, Edward Boyle, presented his speech in the House of Commons with regard to a class in Southall, West London, advising that school classrooms should be no more than 30% ethnic minority (ibid). Policy responded to this by allocating immigrant children places in schools around and out of areas seen as ethnic concentrations to prevent the build up of immigrant concentrations of children in particular schools, and bussing would facilitate this. To counter any humanitarian objections to what could be observed as cold heartedly shuffling children around, Boyle promoted this action as improving access of black people to a better life and a way of reducing prejudice ‘through the deconstruction of stereotypes that linked black people with neighbourhoods characterized by overcrowding, poverty and environmental decay’ (Robinson et al, 2003, p106). The

Cullingworth Committee (1969), although acknowledging the potential problems that ethnic concentration could bring, felt that dispersal would break up already established, self contained communities and that an unknown result would not necessarily justify fracturing communities like these (Robinson et al, 2003, Deakin and Cohen, 1975, Cullingworth Committee, 1969). Also political thinking at that time did not want to be identified with this assimilationist philosophy which contained elements of the worst kind of nationalism and ethnic supremacist thinking. Finally, a policy of voluntary dispersal, with material inducements, was adopted where immigrants were encouraged to live away from areas of concentrated settlement (Robinson et al, 2003, Glazer, 1993, Halfacree, 1993). Many Ugandan Asians arriving in Britain in 1972 had formed part of this induced dispersal but ultimately decided to congregate with relatives in London and Leicester where the two largest concentrations remain to this day (Robinson et al, 2003). It is also important to note here that many of these Ugandan immigrants were relatively affluent, which gave them a greater amount of flexibility on settlement as they were not reliant on welfare and available social housing.

Through large-scale post WWII colonial and commonwealth immigration, the UK was the first country in Europe to experience overt anti immigrant sentiment, but managed joint political party consensus to restrict immigration, and also actively incorporate anti-racist legislation to encourage integration of resident ethnic minorities (Boswell, 2003). However, following Margaret Thatcher's election victory and the implementation of her monetarist policies, high unemployment meant a creeping uneasiness about immigrant workers taking jobs, and a more strident rhetoric emanated forth on immigration and, towards the middle of the 1990s, on asylum in particular (ibid). Restrictionist UK immigration measures and dispersal took a more concentrated turn towards asylum with the arrival of a New Labour

government in 1997. During Margaret Thatcher's lengthy administration, immigration policy had continued along political lines of consensus where entry was restricted, and focus was centred around the integration of its resident ethnic groups. Later in her administration, and into John Major's administration, the target was aimed more towards asylum seekers and illegal immigrants. This is where New Labour stepped in to inherit the 1996 Immigration and Asylum Act that the Major Government had already introduced.

Evolution of UK asylum seeker policy 1990-2006

The next part of this chapter focuses on a shift in immigration policy discourse where the term 'asylum seeker' is introduced into the immigration debate. Despite promises to repeal when in opposition, the present New Labour Government has increased not decreased restrictive powers introduced by the 1996 Act (alluded to in Chapter One) (Gardner, 2006). This government required a more managed immigration policy that tied directly into the British economy and its requirement for labour. Asylum seekers (accompanied by concerns over uncontrolled rising numbers, bogus claims and welfare payments) did not fit into this requirement and were considered a distinct group as their request for asylum came through the humanitarian rather than immigration route.

The increasingly restrictive nature and anti-discriminatory effects of asylum legislation, from a UK perspective, is presented here. Dispersal of asylum seekers as a policy measure leads onto the final sections that concentrate on the localised impacts of dispersal on receiving communities that are pertinent to this thesis. Debates on the clustering of minority ethnic

immigrants is reintroduced to prepare discussion for ethnic minority community placement, the localised impact of asylum seekers on local receiving communities, and how public opinion and the media is affecting the asylum issue generally. The 'asylum seeker' as a marginalized immigrant group which echoes that of black immigrants from the 1950s onwards, brings the term into present day context by examining this process of legislative racialisation of the term 'asylum seeker'.

Patterns of asylum movement and settlement in the UK

To gauge the size of the present asylum 'problem', since the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe in the 1980s, the term 'asylum seeker' has taken on very different connotations from the retrospective romanticized term of the white Eastern European refugee, and has become a large-scale migration policy consideration. Thousands of people were now fleeing conflict from all over the World in order to seek entry to Europe via the asylum door (Stalker, 2002). An example of a large-scale application was when 108,000 Turkish citizens applied for asylum in West Germany at this time (ibid). Numbers of asylum seekers applying to the UK began to rise dramatically from 1996 (37,000), and peaked in 2002 (103,000) (Office of National Statistics (ONS), 2007, Stalker, 2002, Sopemi, 2001). Officially numbers have gradually dropped, halving in 2003 (60,000), and halving again in 2005 to 30,800 (ONS, 2007, 2006). The most recent figures suggest a number of 27,800 in 2006 and 6,800 in the first quarter of 2007 which would suggest a further reduction during this three month period (ONS, 2007). Whilst Germany previously accepted in the largest numbers of asylum seekers (peaking in 1992 at 450,000), numbers reaching the UK have risen steadily and as of 2006, it was the UK and France that were at the top of the acceptance list with 27,800 and 39,300 respectively,

although the first quarter of 2007 showed that Sweden now leads the acceptance list at 9,200 (ONS, 2007, 2004).

The emergence of an immigration policy in the UK (as shown), was based on an ability to control numbers and to be selective as to who is allowed in and this has not changed since New Labour's return to power in 1997 (Lewis and Neal, 2005). As previously stated, compared with New Commonwealth migration, asylum seeking had not been perceived or constructed as a problem per se in the UK and Europe. The term asylum seeker came into common parlance in the 1960s and took on a rather romantic image of white middle class scientists and artists fleeing oppressive totalitarian regimes (mainly the old USSR) and requesting asylum in the West (Robinson et al, 2003). From the end of the Cold War, the image of the 'refugee' or 'asylum seeker' changed from the white eastern middle class European, to a perception of waves of non white, often Muslim people, coming to the West uninvited, in large numbers and under false pretences. Politically the words 'refugee' and 'asylum seeker' have also taken on new meanings. Within the UK, under the Nationality, Asylum and Immigration Act of 2002, Chapter 42 Section 18: No. 73 Asylum-seeker: the definition now is:

'Section 18 defines the term "asylum-seeker" as someone who is at least 18 years old, is in the UK and who has made a claim under the Refugee Convention or under article 3 ECHR, at a place designated by the Secretary of State, which has been recorded by the Secretary of State but which has not yet been determined. Once a person is no longer an asylum-seeker he will no longer be eligible for accommodation in an accommodation centre and will be expected to leave the accommodation centre, the period of time to be prescribed under section 21 (3) allowing him to make

arrangements to do so. However, a person whose household includes a dependant child under the age of 18 will continue to be treated as an asylum-seeker whilst he and the child remain in the United Kingdom and will continue to be eligible for accommodation in an accommodation centre' (ibid, Nationality, Asylum and Immigration Act 2002).

Large increases in asylum immigration numbers from the 1990s onwards resulted in the introduction of five major Acts of Parliament in a decade (1996-2006). Until 1993 (Asylum Appeals Act 1993), no specific asylum legislation existed in the UK; the previous piece of legislation on immigration being the 1971 Immigration Act, although there has been provision for claiming asylum from persecution as far back as the 1914 Aliens Restriction Act (Gardner, 2006). It was, therefore, the introduction of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, by the exiting Conservative government, which was introduced primarily to reform the benefits structure afforded to this particular group of immigrants.

The position of the asylum seeker differed radically from mainstream immigration in that right of admission into the UK was based on humanitarian convention rather than colonial or commonwealth obligation, EU membership requirement, or a requirement for labour. However, on a more practical level, legislation was prompted by what was perceived by the then Conservative Home Secretary Kenneth Baker and a belief that has been upheld since by the present Labour government that a loophole existed, where economic migrants were abusing the selective immigration system by claiming asylum (HO, 1998, preface). Rising numbers of asylum seekers and media coverage about 'soft touch Britain' and the abuse of the welfare state put pressure on the Conservative government to introduce legislation that sought to simplify and reduce welfare benefits to asylum seekers and introduce new restrictions on

immigration generally and new penalties for immigration offences (*Guardian*, 15 July, 1996).

The desired policy effects of these restrictive measures will be discussed later in the chapter.

Before the 1996 Act, the appeals system was covered by the 1993 Immigration and Asylum Appeals Act and linked in with the Dublin Convention 1990 (eventually superseded by Dublin II Regulation 2003) and provided a legal basis for determining which EU Member State was responsible for examining an asylum application. The 1951 UN Convention, apart from agreeing to receive applications for asylum within their shores, signatories were obliged to maintain refused asylum seekers' right to appeal, although strict time limits were laid down. Legislation had also been tied into Article 23 of the UN Convention, where signatories had to treat asylum seekers as they would their own citizens ie they were to be supported by in-house social security benefits. The Asylum and Immigration Act of 1996 - although Britain still remained a signatory to the UN Convention - changed benefit entitlement by removing asylum seekers to a separate category. Now penalties were imposed if people did not claim asylum at the port of entry (referred to as 'in-country' applicants), (although penalties of this kind were not allowed under the Convention), and benefits were refused on this basis. The result of this, however, was an increased number in destitute asylum seekers (Gardner, 2006). This, in turn, was challenged in the High Court under Section 21 of the National Assistance Act 1948 which states that destitute adults should be supported by local authorities (*ibid*). This judgement was eventually upheld, thus another tier of support was to be provided by local authorities (*ibid*). Official statistics show that the 1996 Act temporarily reduced asylum numbers coming to the UK (Zetter, et al, 2003). However, it is unknown whether the Act actually deterred those from illegally entering the country at that time, where direct pre-entry measures were found to have the greatest effect generally in Europe (Gardner, 2006, Pinkerton et al, 2004, Zetter et al, 2003, HO, 1998). Therefore a statute designed to dissuade asylum seeking had limited effect.

The incumbent Labour government's 'firm but fair' approach increasingly resulted in the marginalization of asylum seekers. This approach towards asylum stood in stark contrast to the racial justice agenda (referred to in Chapter One), and the implementation of the 1998 Human Rights Act (which came fully into force in 2000) in which freedom of expression, conscience and religion was cemented into the statute book a year after their election victory. However the Human Rights Act enabled victims of alleged breaches of the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights to apply (in asylum cases) to immigration officers and the Secretary of State and also brought about the right of an asylum seeker to appeal against refusal of claims (Clements, 2001).

Effects of the White Paper and 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act

The main aim of the Immigration and Asylum Act of 1999, as the title of the White Paper, *Fairer, Faster, Firmer* suggested, was reformatory in nature and designed to manage asylum claims quickly but also to show awareness of the UK's moral obligations under the 1951 Convention (Clements, 2001). However, it increasingly sought to control and manage asylum seekers through a focus on dispersal away from London, vouchers rather than benefit payments, detentions and deportations.

The White Paper, which pre-empted the 1999 Act, proposed a single budget for asylum seekers managed solely by the Home Office and thus began the cementation process of a separateness of control (Gardner, 2006, Bloch and Schuster, 2005, HO, 1998). Support would be solely coordinated by a new division within the Immigration and Nationality Directorate at the Home Office, called the Asylum Support Directorate which later became NASS (National

Asylum Support Service) when the 1999 Act came into being. Under Sections 95 and 98 of the 1999 Act, NASS was given sole control over asylum seekers who had valid or outstanding asylum claims (Gardner, 2006). The main aims of the White Paper were to plug some of the holes left by previous legislation where NASS would be responsible for supporting potentially destitute asylum seekers at a cheaper rate than mainstream welfare (thus deterring so called asylum cheats), and asylum cases would remain separate in this way (Clements, 2001).

Although government funding could have been provided directly to the voluntary sector to assist destitute people for example, the 1996 Act had initiated the definition of asylum seekers as a specific group by removing their entitlement to specific benefits and funding (Gardner, 2006). The 1999 Act had the effect of channelling everything to do with asylum under the Home Office umbrella and away from local authority control. However, rather than simplify the situation, additional levels of bureaucracy introduced a large number of government departments that also dealt with asylum issues (Health and Education), and had to be coordinated through the Home Office (Gardner, 2006). There were also elements within the 1999 Act that forced local authorities to provide housing. Through the Asylum Support (Interim Provisions) Regulations 1999, and the Asylum Support (Interim Provisions) (Amendment) Regulations 2002, NASS increased its hold over housing provision. This legislation was, allegedly, supposed to simplify provision, however it now meant that adult asylum seekers and their dependents could be supported by the local authority, the voluntary sector, NASS or through social security benefits (ibid).

Further restrictive measures were enabled through asylum legislation during this period. A 'no cash' voucher system which was introduced by the 1999 Act was another disincentive to deter economic migrants, in which asylum seekers were only 'given essential living needs' although

Zetter et al's findings indicated that welfare provision was not a significant pull factor (Gardner, 2006, Zetter, et al, 2003, House of Commons, 1999b, section 5(1)(b)). The vouchers system was abolished with the introduction of the 2002 White Paper, *Secure Borders, Safe Haven* and NASS cash support was introduced in April 2002 (Gardner, 2006). However, vouchers still remained for failed asylum seekers applying for Section 4 support.

The 1999 Act also increased the likelihood of detention for asylum applicants. Immediately post the Act, three detention centres were opened at Oakington (2000), Harmondsworth (2001) and Yarl's Wood (2001), with other centres at Dover, Waterloo, Heathrow and Manchester Airport (2001) (Bloch and Schuster, 2005). Dungavel prison was also converted into a detention centre at this time and later designated as a removal centre through the 2002 Act. Other restrictions, regarding the denial of employment entitlements, were introduced in July 2002, and were also seen as a deterrent. Provisions were re-enacted under Section 8 of the 1996 Act, and employers could be prosecuted for employing illegal immigrants. Again the removal of employment entitlements for asylum seekers seemed to have limited impact on applications in Europe generally at this time (Zetter, et al, 2003).

Dispersal away from London and Audit Commission recommendations

It was the 1999 White Paper that prompted a change of dispersal policy which directly affects this thesis (discussed in greater detail in the final section of this Chapter). Local authorities surrounding London were experiencing severe financial difficulties in providing service provision, thus proposals were made that asylum applicants should be dispersed where there was more readily available housing around the UK (Gardner, 2006). This was generally agreed within Parliament as a good move, but coordination from IND/NASS at Croydon

initially provided limited support to dispersal areas and the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture complained that specialist resources for asylum seekers were not sufficient away from the London and the South East (Clements, 2001). These fears had also been alluded to by the Audit Commission (the government's watchdog) in its report, *Another Country: Implementing Dispersal under the Immigration and Asylum Act, 1999*. The Commission's recommendations were based on considerable fieldwork around proposed dispersal sites in the UK, although Robinson et al felt that researchers only visited areas conversant with asylum seeker management (Robinson et al, 2003). The Commission questioned likely deterrent effects of the new arrangements brought in by the 1999 Act (welfare benefits) (ibid). However, its main concern was the effectiveness of support away from London where: 'inadequate support services outside London present a major barrier to dispersal....Unless these barriers are removed, problems will persist and could undermine the government's social inclusion objective' (Clements, 2001, p187, Audit Commission, 2000c, p3). The Commission continued: 'for local agencies with little knowledge of the cultural needs of asylum seekers, or the problems that new arrivals often face in using services, dispersal will present an immense challenge. Local government and its partners need to learn fast and plan well if they are to meet the needs of this vulnerable group. Failure to do so could escalate community tensions and incur distress to asylum seekers and constrain the long-term opportunities of those allowed to stay in this country. Without effective support, asylum seekers could easily become locked in a cycle of exclusion and dependency in their new community. Alternatively they could simply 'vote with their feet' and return to London, again putting pressure on health and education services in the capital' (Robinson et al, 2003, Audit Commission, 2000c, p4). As Clements also pointed out, for a government that had been instrumental in setting up the Social Exclusion Unit, a dispersal policy that ultimately alienated asylum seekers within settlement areas and could not provide any form of familiarity

for them, seemed rather shortsighted (Clements, 2001). As this thesis addresses settlement away from London and the South East and the conduciveness of settlement in ethnically diverse communities, continued reference will be made to Audit Commission recommendations throughout this Chapter.

Other policies on settlement and dispersal were evolving at this time, and accommodation centres where housing, education and health facilities offered for applicants on one site, were seen as a preferable policy option, and certainly more controlled than dispersal to inner city areas across the UK. It was Section 22 of the Nationality and Immigration Act 2002 that enabled these accommodation centres to be built at Bicester in Oxfordshire, Nottinghamshire and Gloucestershire. (This policy measure was discussed more fully in Chapter One and is also discussed further in the next section). However, these plans were eventually shelved in June 2005 after it was thought that centres like these provided a very visual target for any public opposition and, of course, there was much opposition from residents to the local councils involved.

2002 White Paper and the Nationality and Immigration Act

The implementation of the White Paper *Secure Borders, Safe Havens* pre-empted the Nationality and Immigration Act of 2002. It was this piece of legislation, although replacing the much maligned vouchers scheme, more than any other that sought to manage the entirety of the asylum seekers' stay in the UK (Flynn, 2003). Although this paper was heralded as a welcome to immigrants with measures that promoted migration (Sales, 2005), other facets sought to restrict asylum seekers further. Elements of the 1996 Act for example, were enacted where in-house claimants would not be allowed to receive benefits which in turn had resulted

in increased destitution. However, numerous Court of Appeal judgments linking in with the Human Rights Act of 1998 emanated from this, resulting in each case having to be heard on its own merits, and again adding to the bureaucracy instead of simplifying it. Other televised images of asylum seekers, escaping from the Sangatte refugee camp in an attempt to cross the Channel, dominated television news at that time and again raised public awareness of illegal migration and fears that up to 200 asylum seekers a night were escaping, via Eurotunnel, to Britain (Boswell, 2003, *Guardian*, 23 May, 2002). The British government and railway executives both felt that there was a lack of commitment by the French government to keep Sangatte secure. Eventually, after increased pressure by the then Home Secretary David Blunkett, Sangatte was closed in December, 2002 (*Guardian*, 2 December, 2002).

With a building amount of legislation designed to simplify asylum management, repatriation of failed asylum seekers should by now have been a straightforward process. However, many were refusing to return and chose to remain destitute in the UK. Section 4 of the 1999 Act had made provision for support to be allocated to single failed asylum seekers whose exceptional circumstances meant that they could not be returned to their country of origin (Gardner, 2006). This could be due to illness, or an inability to return people to areas of conflict (United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), 1967, Article I(1), UNHCR, 1951, Article 33(1)). It was also a requirement, set down in the 1999 Act, that those who were granted Section 4 support, were required to register with the International Organization for Migration for repatriation. However, there was further provision here that signatories had to be provided with a safe route of return. As there was no safe route of return to Iraq at that time, a case was upheld in High Court, and Section 4 support which provided vouchers and accommodation could be given to Iraqi Kurds without their having to agree to be repatriated (HO, 2005). This judgement has now been repealed after a safe route for return was facilitated, via Jordan, and

eventually more direct routes to Baghdad were managed. Section 94 of the 1999 Act had allowed support for asylum seekers with dependents until their repatriation. However, the 2004 Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants etc) Act removed automatic entitlement of failed asylum seekers with dependants to NASS support (Gardner, 2006). Invariably support was given but on the proviso that they agreed to leave the UK. Other conditions that recipients of Section 4 would have to participate in community activities were also shelved, as ambiguities here meant that failed asylum seekers would be expected to work for money that they were already entitled to under the 2004 Act. Destitution, as a direct consequence of statutory measures, will be discussed in the final section of this chapter.

Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006: managed economic migration and contained asylum

In 2005, the Home Office introduced a five year strategy on asylum and immigration *Controlling our borders: making migration work for Britain*, thus openly combining immigration and asylum statutes. This again pre-empted the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Bill which came into force in April 2006. This piece of legislation broke with the tradition of a zero immigration policy and prepared the way to allow for the admittance of large numbers of immigrants and also make provision for their return home (in line with European guest worker schemes) (Gardner, 2006). As Don Flynn observed: ‘in contrast to the ever-increasing restrictions imposed on the movement of asylum seekers, the economic policy agenda has appeared to be moving in a liberalizing direction, with a wider range of opportunities being presented to the migrant worker’ (Flynn, 2005, p463). However Flynn argued that the increased regulation placed upon these immigration flows would ultimately have implications for race relations policy generally, an example being that rates of refusal of

entry in the UK against targeted nationalities with visas, are higher than travellers arriving without visas (ibid). He said: 'the real goal of policy is the reassertion of the capacity for state control which was largely lost in the immigration crises of the late 1980s onwards' (Flynn, 2005, p466, 2003). More restrictions were also introduced for immigrants and there was no automatic right now for secondary migration (elements having been implemented since the 1962, 1969 Immigration Acts). The only automatic right for family reunification was for those granted refugee status under the 1951 Convention.

The 2006 Act itself becomes even more prescriptive and restrictive towards the asylum seekers. However, its main aim appears to be to make the economic migrant route more attractive, with emphasis put on the right of appeal against refusal. Section 83A, under Appeals, states that it is to: 'provide a right of appeal for people no longer recognized as refugees but who are being allowed to stay in the UK on another basis.....the right of appeal will be solely against the decision that the person in question no longer qualifies as a refugee' (Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006). Other status categories such as Protection or Discretionary Leave were now excluded and particular restrictions on statuses were introduced, granting successful asylum seekers a selection of temporary statuses rather than the more permanent 'indefinite leave to enter/remain'. Other elements of this Act that sought to simplify applications and restrict and monitor asylum seeker movement however, put increased pressure on caseworkers who had to work with growing amounts of legislation and bureaucracy (Gardner, 2006).

Restrictive measures: deportation, detention and dispersal

The overall impact of increasingly draconian measures designed to position asylum seekers within a managed in/out policy has been met with much criticism, not only from a

humanitarian viewpoint, but also from an organisational perspective where it is questionable that these restrictionist measures actually work. There were also questions as to the effects that restrictionist measures could have on democratic countries like the UK. As Caloz-Tschopp argued: 'the increased use of deterrence policies may actually have a harmful effect on the liberal state, since those policies call into question the foundation on which the state is based. Therefore, deterrence policies not only threaten asylum seekers, but also the very fabric of the liberal democratic state' (cited in Hassan, 2000, p201).

An earlier assessment by Roger Zetter et al for the Home Office, commissioned by the Immigration Research and Statistics Service (IRSS), which sought to determine how successful these restrictive measures had been across the European countries between 1990-2000 (Zetter et al, 2003), found that the implication of early restrictive measures by Germany, France and Sweden seemed to have reduced numbers, where later measures by the UK, Netherlands and Belgium had had less impact on applications (Zetter et al, 1999). Direct pre-entry measures seemed to have had the greatest impact, where indirect measures such as reception facilities, detention and withdrawal of welfare benefits appear to have had much more limited impact (ibid). The removal by the 1999 Act of asylum access to social housing provision and a restructuring towards private housing and housing associations, resulted in a lack of coordination and networking and generally compounded poor service provision, yet still failed to achieve its objective which was to deter asylum seekers from applying in the UK (Zetter and Pearl, 1999). Ironically, a proposal by the Home Office to take children of asylum seekers who have been refused leave to remain into care, led the *Daily Express* to question the draconian measures as going too far (*Daily Express* editorial, 17 November 2003).

As high percentages of asylum seekers are now repatriated (74% in the first quarter of 2003, (ONS, 2003), risen to 89% in March 2004 (ONS 2004), and a rise of 19% in the first quarter of 2006 (ONS, 2006)), this may result in many asylum seekers arriving in Britain and not registering (although Section 55 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act refuses support to asylum seekers who do not register) (The Act, 2002). Thus this could have the effect of reducing *official* numbers of asylum seekers coming into Britain, but actually more have arrived through illegal means (via the tunnel from Sangatte for example (National Audit Office, 2004)). The UNHCR has deemed that implementation of Section 55, by allowing asylum seekers who do not register in time to become destitute, as inhumane. The former Home Secretary, David Blunkett, dropped this policy and issued a staff instruction that no-one should be refused state benefits unless it was obvious that they have alternative means of support (UNHCR, 26 June, 2004). However, there are unknown numbers of destitute failed asylum seekers who refuse to return to their home of origin and numbers here can only be estimated locally, via charitable organisations that provide food parcels such as the local refugee advice centre in Romantown.

Zetter et al's research also found it is not the availability of welfare in this country that is the main draw for asylum seekers to Britain, so we could assume that there are other attractions in coming here (Zetter et al, 2003). Vaughan Robinson et al concurred with this assumption and alluded to the National Audit Commission report (2000c) which questioned the likely restrictive effects of the existing support arrangements and dispersal (Robinson et al, 2003). Robinson et al said that the Audit Commission findings on UK preference as to 'why asylum seekers opt to seek refuge in the UK rather than other countries has supported the conclusion that welfare regimes have only a limited deterrent value' (ibid, p127, Robinson and Segrott, 2002). Thus, the popular assertion that asylum seekers are economic migrants in disguise,

intent on coming to this country to receive benefits and use our health service, may be a complete misnomer (Zetter et al, 2003). Other considerations such as familial ties, religious freedom and cultural diversity are more likely to draw asylum seekers to the UK (ibid, Robinson et al, 2003, Boswell, 2003, Dawson, 2002).

The aim here has been to present and examine the complexities of increasing levels of legislation on asylum that have been introduced during this period (1990-2006), and to show that although it has been the intention of policy makers to simplify the asylum process, the results have been to make the whole procedure unwieldy, inhumane and inefficient. Both the statutory and voluntary sectors therefore have had to work with increasing amounts of bureaucracy surrounding the regulation and management of asylum support. Although management of asylum dispersal in all its forms has been to devolve responsibility to NASS, increasingly local authorities and the voluntary sector have become involved with dispersal of people to their respective areas since the introduction of the 1999 White Paper. Dispersal has thus become a major policy issue in which numbers of asylum seekers from all over the world arrive at local doorsteps in many very different locations in the UK. This next section focuses on the impact of dispersal particularly as a policy measure in settling asylum seekers within the UK and also discusses its localised effects.

Dispersal and localized impacts

The effectiveness of increasingly draconian policy measures and the normalisation (and mainstreaming) of formerly extreme measures such as deportation, detention and dispersal have been brought into common policy parlance by the present government, to reassert control

over borders, immigration and asylum seeking (Bloch and Schuster, 2005). Although detentions and deportations are relevant, it is dispersal based policy interventions and the localized impact of this that forms the core of concern of this thesis and where asylum seekers have been dispersed to Romantown.

Asylum seekers, as a highly diverse and numerically increasing immigrant group, have been excessively hard for governments to manage. They have arrived on an ad hoc basis, and numbers are difficult to gauge when many remain here illegally after their asylum claims have been turned down (Boswell, 2003). The political and populist climate, fed by right wing media, is hostile and legislation has taken away asylum seekers' ability to work. The British government faces problems of where to place people safely for indeterminate periods whilst appeals are being heard. However, dispersal as a policy response to these difficulties has received strong criticism. Bloch and Schuster (2005, p503) refer to asylum dispersal as: 'social and psychological exclusion' to be classed in the same vein as racialised social policy intervention used to manage black post WWII settlement in Britain, to prevent the clustering of migrants within the inner cities (discussed in the earlier part of this chapter and Chapter One). Thus, the asylum issue remains the bane of any government that comes into power and dispersal a real problem area.

Up to the passing of the 1999 Asylum and Immigration Act, asylum policy followed similar lines to that of immigration policy in which the provision of housing and other issues was the responsibility of the local authority. Post the 1999 White Paper and subsequent Act, NASS became responsible for the dispersal of asylum seekers to ten regions outside London and the South East (Robinson et al, 2003). Other policy initiatives, such as large purpose built accommodation centres (enabled through Section 22 of the *Nationality, Immigration and*

Asylum Act, April 2002), were proposed later as an alternative to dispersal, to house and fast track asylum applications. However, as noted, proposals for these reception centres to be built were eventually scrapped because of strong objections by local residents. Concern was also raised by the Refugee Council, which suggested that confining people in large detention centres could contravene asylum seekers' human rights under the Human Rights Act (1998) (UNHCR, 25 July, 2004, McNeill, 2003, Richards, 2002, Mortimer, 1996). Eventually none of the reception centres were built and proposals for accommodation centres were scrapped. Dispersal thus remained as the favoured policy initiative of settlement for asylum seekers who had no means of support, and was to be managed solely by NASS.

Problems encountered with dispersal

Dispersal of asylum seekers to cluster areas across the UK away from London had varying degrees of success. To cater for asylum seekers in these dispersal areas, the 1999 Act provided for consortia of local organisations and authorities to combine to manage the full range of services that would be needed by asylum seekers. However, the availability of housing was presenting problems for NASS and settlement was becoming organised towards the availability, rather than the suitability, of housing within dispersal areas. Vaughan Robinson et al quoted Audit Commission proposals on area suitability and preparation for settlement, which was approached in Chapter One (Robinson et al, 2003, Audit Commission, 2000c). The Commission put forward a number of suggestions which included questions on ethnic composition and community relations, the provision of specialist legal advisers, correct training of agency workers, comprehensive interpreting facilities and places of worship (ibid, Audit Commission, 2000c). However, Bloch and Schuster (2005) and Robinson et al (2003) had pointed towards feelings of isolation for asylum seekers as being one of the main factors

that led to secondary migration back to London and the South East. Although equal dispersal across regions, as in Germany, seemed fair where the burden of settlement would be spread across the country, in reality it tended to run into all sorts of problems. Andrew Dawson's research (2002) also concurred with Robinson et al, and Bloch and Schuster, where dispersal to a mono-cultural area of Hull resulted in local tensions and an eventual 'drift' by alienated and isolated asylum seekers from their dispersed areas to sites of their own choosing (Dawson, 2002). Dawson, like Robinson, et al, Boswell, Schuster and Bloch, stressed that networks of extended family, friends and religious, ethnic or national groups maybe one of the main factors for assisting asylum seekers to remain in the settlement community (Bloch and Schuster, 2005, Robinson et al, 2003, Boswell, 2003, Dawson, 2002).

As discussed in Chapter One, Don Flynn had determined that there was less opposition to asylum seekers within ethnically diverse communities (Bloch and Schuster, 2005, Flynn, 2003, Spencer, 2001). Apart from these communities generally adhering better to Audit Commission guidelines, Flynn also concluded that residents from the ethnically diverse inner city were far less concerned about asylum seeking generally, and that in this way 'modern urban societies provide a relatively amenable landscape for all sorts of individuals who wish to avoid the constant scrutiny of the public authorities' (Flynn, 2003, p18, Robinson et al, 2003, Audit Commission, 2000c). For Flynn: 'anxiety over immigration is largely 'legitimised' by the character of the national political discourse rather than practical experience of problems' (ibid, p18). This is an important point as it highlights the difference between national and local views within more multi-ethnic urban areas. However, as suggested in Chapter One, although Home Office reports could understand the wisdom of dispersal to these areas, current policy drives towards cohesion and integration determined that increased settlement to these areas was unwise (Anie et al, 2005, Agar and Strang, 2004)

In reality, however, as Robinson et al had pointed out, other determinants such as cheap and available housing rather than suitability were the deciding factor as to where asylum seekers were ultimately placed by NASS, and localized impacts of settlement are discussed next (Robinson, et al, 2003).

Localized impacts of dispersal policies – existing research findings

The final part of this section focuses on the current research into the local impact that asylum settlement has had on receiving communities. As stated previously, legislation was introduced rapidly to appease public concerns over asylum, but the government was still presented with logistical problems with regard to suitable placements, post the 1999 Act, which determined that asylum seekers should be dispersed outside the London and Kent areas. The Audit Commission's criteria (2000c) had suggested that certain questions should be asked before asylum seekers were dispersed (approached in the previous section and Chapter One). These are more fully that they: should include whether the area has a multicultural population; are there people there already of the same nationality as the asylum seeker; does the area have a history of racial tension; are there sufficient refugee groups and support organizations there; are there school places; is there comprehensive language provision; is there legal support; are there employment opportunities in the longer term; are there existing places of worship; are there services such as shops within walking distance that accept vouchers; are there good local transport; and local Primary Care Trusts that have enough GPs to meet the needs of both the local community and the new asylum seekers (Robinson et al, 2003). It was obvious from resultant tensions in cities like Glasgow and Hull, that many placements had not fitted the criteria in many respects, but that other placements in Romantown had, although there had been problems over the allocation of a particular GP surgery to asylum seekers in Romantown

which caused tensions with local Pakistani and Sikh communities (*Denton Evening Telegraph*, 24 February, 2003, 4 September, 2002, Dawson, 2002).

Over the past eight years, since dispersal outside London came into force, there have been many studies on dispersal communities around the UK. Chapter Four goes into greater detail on the benefits in performing a single rather than comparative case study, but for the purpose of this section, it is useful to examine a variety of empirical studies on dispersal by a number of academics in the field of refugee and asylum studies. A good place to start is a literature review, performed for the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) that gathered information which examined attitudes towards asylum seekers and refugees in settlement communities (Finney and Peach, 2004). Factors were based on demographic, economic, social and cultural, psychological, political and geographic accounts with positive views coming from young people with wealthier and better educated backgrounds. Findings suggested that attitudes changed relative to geography, but both Nissa Finney and Esme Peach determined that little was known about the role of religion, culture and ethnicity in attitude formation which my thesis studies in depth (ibid). Finney also carried out questionnaires on media influence on attitudes towards asylum seekers in five towns in England and Wales (Leeds, Swansea, Cardiff, Sheffield and Barrow-in-Furness), where she found that the local press had played a dominant role in its ability to influence opinion (Finney, 2004). The influence of the press was also the main focus of a working paper by Finney and Vaughan Robinson (2007) that reiterates the importance of the press in reflecting local community understanding of asylum issues. They stated that: ‘despite ingrained national discourses on some aspects of asylum issues, notably the need for dispersal to facilitate integration and the avoidance of ‘ghettos’, there are still significant and important local differences in how the issues are framed and constructed.... that in terms of understanding discourses around asylum, it is essential to take

into account local identity and local moral discourses on accommodating diversity. Furthermore it is suggested that there is political potential in local discourse that challenge the dominant supra-local, moral panic discourses' (ibid, introduction). The effects of the local and national media in Romantown are discussed in Chapter Five, where local Sikh and Pakistani respondents did not automatically draw on populist discourses on asylum seekers, and Chapter Two where contextually Wallman's studies displayed different attitudes towards minority ethnic residents within two ethnically similar demographics (Wallman, 1988). Romantown residents were more concerned over local issues – the allocation of a local surgery to asylum seekers and approaches by young Kurdish men to Pakistani and Sikh women. Dispersal should therefore take into account local identity constructions where, from a Foucauldian perspective, discourses tied into power relations are: 'temporally and spatially relative and are the product of particular, historically contingent 'regimes of truth'', which my thesis seeks to address (Finney and Robinson, 2007, p22, Carter, 1997, p142-143). As Finney and Robinson (2007) have observed: 'local discourses can also exert power. Studies of reactions to such issues as asylum should not, therefore, ignore the local scale and local variations. In terms of understanding discourses around dispersal, taking into account local senses of identity and local moral discourses on accommodating diversity is crucial' (Finney and Robinson, 2007, p23).

The singular nature of study is therefore an issue in which local dispersal affects local people in particular ways although, as argued in this thesis, reception also depends on the extent that national discourses have on these local communities. Lisa d'Onofrio and Karen Munk's comparative study (2003) concerned itself with the effect that large numbers of dispersed asylum seekers would have on anxious local communities and compared two very different dispersals in Leeds and Bicester (d'Onofrio and Munk, 2003). What these studies sought to do

was to find common ground or frameworks, and this becomes extremely difficult when dealing with very different neighbourhood demographics (Agar and Strang, 2004). While the study by d’Onofrio and Munk (2003) highlighted poor knowledge about asylum and immigration and information provision as a prime concern – which would also concur with the Audit Commission’s concerns (2000c) - as Finney and Robinson have argued, it is the particular nature of local responses that will ultimately affect placement and it is exactly this which my thesis concentrates on.

A study carried out by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation by David Robinson and Kesia Reeve (*Neighbourhood Experiences of New Immigration*) approached issues such as new immigrant populations preferring to cluster with people of similar ethnic origins, and the importance that ethnic clustering can play in the lives of the new immigrants (Robinson and Reeve, 2006). This piece of research took into account existing resident immigration streams from the Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities. Robinson and Reeve also suggested that service provision and agency links could be better and that the local media could play a highly negative role (again observed by and Finney and Robinson) and that tensions could rise in disadvantaged neighbourhoods where service provision was limited (ibid). What this piece of work does do is highlight the virtues of clustering of same ethnic groups with shared experiences of racism and persecution, and they concurred with Audit Commission recommendations and quoted access to religious facilities as being particularly conducive to successful settlement (Robinson and Reeve, 2006, Robinson et al, 2003, Audit Commission, 2000c). Other findings, such as local socio-economic conditions; the previous history of settlement; current ethnic composition; and the variation of experiences by different cultural and ethnic groups; also concur with concerns approached in my own study (ibid).

Other research focussed on particular issues such as destitution. Rhett Moran's participatory action research project (2003) focussed on destitute Kurdish asylum seekers in Salford and Manchester. Her research, which sought to raise awareness of destitution and interrogate policy on dispersal issues in Salford, ultimately became too uncomfortably pertinent for politics locally and she was dismissed from Salford University in 2005 (*Guardian*, 12 February, 2006), although her report funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation was eventually finished (Moran and Temple, 2005). I deal with the dangers of my own over involvement on sensitive topics such as destitution in Chapter Four. In contravention to Audit Commission guidelines on ethnic composition, Moran was amazed that 12,000 asylum seekers from 63 different countries in 2002 had been dispersed to the overwhelmingly white working class city of Salford (Moran, 2003). Although concurring with the community cohesion agenda on integration, she felt that government policies on asylum sought to stigmatise and separate and by products of policies were issues such as destitution, which Dawson also concurs with (his studies on Hull are discussed next) (Moran and Temple, 2005, 2003, Dawson, 2002). The management of destitution as a local policy issue in Romantown is discussed further in Chapter Six.

Christine Goodall (2005), like Moran, focussed on settlements of Iraqi Kurd asylum seekers to predominantly white areas, this time in Stoke on Trent. It was also her intention to conduct research that was locally based and context specific, and from her own literature review, she highlighted the need for more local and context specific research. Goodhall was forced to concentrate on the more negative aspects of settlement. In Stoke, Kurdish asylum seekers had been dispersed to predominantly poor white communities where there existed a narrow and declining industrial base and low educational attainment generally. She described the antagonism towards new settlements of Kurds, by local residents, as: 'the appearance of

racism in a particularly vicious form, and strikingly increasing support for the British National Party' (Goodhall, 2005, 3). Iraqi Kurds were also being moved from Romantown to Stoke at this time, with some reticence initially as findings from my observation within the Refugee Advice Centre showed they had no wish to leave Romantown where large Kurdish networks existed (Denton Refugee Advice Centre, March, 2005).

It is the lack of ethnic (rather than asylum) networks and a multicultural population generally (again recommendations made by the Audit Commission) that Andrew Dawson suggested created the problems in Hull. Dawson (2002) showed how dispersal (via NASS) was based on cheap available housing, but that local authorities had paid attention to the clustering that enabled asylum seekers to tap into networks of extended family, friends, religious and ethnic groups among other asylum seekers (Dawson, 2002). Dawson anticipated problems, such as the increase of tensions through dispersal to poor white areas, but found violence towards asylum seekers was mainly between the asylum seekers themselves rather than from the indigenous population. Boswell (2003) too found that where dispersal was to areas where there were no existing ethnic groups, this resulted in social tension being at its highest (Boswell, 2003, Dawson, 2002). Dawson finally condemned NASS for using non-regulated private housing in depressed areas of Hull to house asylum seekers and concluded that many had left the area. Housing may not have been of prime concern when accounting for asylum seeker drift, however. Rather, as with Audit Commission recommendations, people prefer better established community networks and existing religious faith communities in which the plight of the asylum seeker is understood more by immigrant populations of residents already there. Dawson again assessed the local impact of asylum seekers, refugees and other migrants, but his study takes a novel twist by observing the effect that the *creation* of this new immigrant community has on members of the new community itself.

Alice Bloch's research (2002) on refugees and employment, similarly demonstrated the importance of kinship and networks. She found that the main reason for asylum seekers remaining in a particular area was the existence of a related community group. It could also be argued that within new dispersal communities, there was a lack of seasoned management (in Hull for example), and they compared poorly to places like Romantown where there existed practiced agency networks in the management of tension and conflict.

Larger scale quantitative studies also relate to local issues. Examples of these are: survey on policy and practice related to refugee integration (Zetter et al, 2002); the formation of integration strategies (Agar and Strang, 2004) (discussed further in Chapter Six); plus the role of refugee community organizations to aid integration (Zetter et al, 2005); and Refugee Action's latest report which focuses on destitution (2006). Zetter et al's assessment of the impact of asylum policies over ten years from 1990 to 2000 (referred to earlier in this chapter), has been useful in assessing the effect (or lack of effect) that restrictive policy measures have actually had on asylum applications to the UK and across Europe, although they admit the task was difficult (Zetter et al, 2003). The reasons given for this included the sheer number of policy instruments being introduced at any given time, but Zetter et al did suggest that indirect measures such as reception facilities, detention and the withdrawal of benefits had had a limited impact on asylum applications (Zetter, et al, 2003). For Zetter et al: 'there is strong circumstantial evidence (but little authoritative research) to show that restrictive measures had led to the growth in trafficking and illegal entry of both asylum seekers and economic migrants' which was another unpleasant byproduct of these measures (ibid, p3).

Recommendations by Refugee Action (2006) determined that refused asylum seekers should not be forced into destitution, and that they should continue to receive support via Section 95

rather than be channelled through the failed route of Section 4 benefits (which resorts to vouchers again). The report also recommended that asylum seekers who have been here for a number of years should be granted access to benefits and allowed to work and that money should be forthcoming to local authorities to help support failed asylum seekers.

Existing asylum seeker research in Romantown

Importantly there are a number of existing local studies of asylum seeker settlement in Romantown. These are small scale and issue specific, focussing for example on skills audits and basic data and mapping projects (Fox, 2006, Pearce, Pearce and Wynne, 2005, Aldridge and Waddington, 2002, and Subhra, 2002). These have provided much needed up to date local information and proved to be an invaluable local resource and research tool. Again, the utility of these local projects will be discussed in more depth in Chapter Six where, on the basis of empirical evidence, governance and asylum in Romantown is discussed. Unlike most examples of localised dispersal presented here, Romantown ticks many of the boxes of recommendations put forward by the Audit Commission to offer a hospitable more responsive settlement to asylum seekers (2000c). However, it is a rather naive assumption by central government that all ethnic minorities will get on. Dispersal was stopped in Romantown in 2003 after local tensions escalated, but was reinstated in 2006 for a six month trial period. This later dispersal initiative was solely for families because of previous problems with settlements of single Iraqi Kurds and local communities of Pakistani and Sikhs. Dispersal has now to all intents and purposes, stopped (Denton Refugee Forum, July, 2007). It is the multiethnic composition of Romantown however, that bears the focus of policy and media arguments on segregated living (discussed in Chapter One that will form part of discussions in Chapters Five and Six).

My own attitude questionnaire around Romantown in 2002, as part of my Masters studies (and preceding this thesis), found that although there were some concerns about large numbers of asylum seekers coming into the community, these were questions relevant to the locality and about the asylum seekers themselves rather than general antagonism (Richards, 2002). My survey was conducted with Romantown residents in predominantly Muslim, white and mixed streets to form a comparison of responses. There were issues, from Pakistani and Sikh young women who had been approached by young Kurdish men; generally local media coverage was perceived as negative; people in the street with mainly Muslim residents had more contact with asylum seekers than people living in other streets; and all bar one respondent claimed that they would allow their children to make friends with refugee and asylum children at school (ibid). The most negative responses tended to come from the street with predominantly white English residents. Overall, the Muslim and Sikh respondents were far more welcoming, and spoke of their memories of their relatively recent arrival and settlement in Romantown (I will return to these issues in Chapter Five).

Conclusion

Within this chapter I have attempted to examine the history of immigration and the effect that resultant legislation has had in influencing the racialisation of migration politics and policy. The fairly limited effects of restrictive measures employed to quell public fears over what has been regarded as excessive immigration into the UK and concerns over the clustering of immigrants into ghettos, have also been addressed. The chapter has argued that the evolution of asylum policy has certainly followed the same increasingly restrictionist routes. It has demonstrated how asylum seekers have, through expanding legislation, been manoeuvred into

a separate juridical category (Lewis and Neal, 2005), and as an immigrant group, been subjected to highly restrictive policy measures, which in turn, has racialised and marginalized them.

This chapter has detailed dispersal as a policy instrument. It has shown its historical legacy in the UK, tracing its use back to New Commonwealth migrants in the 1960s to its contemporary re-emergence in New Labour's policies for the management of asylum seekers. The chapter has argued that the impact of central government made immigration policies is best viewed locally and has examined the findings of a growing body of research – much Home Office funded – into asylum seeker settlement and experiences in local areas of the UK. This research has emphasised the importance of asylum seeker related support and community networks in the settlement of asylum seekers and social order. This has been translated in policy terms into dispersal initiatives favouring multi-ethnic locations outside of the over-stretched South East of England. In this way, the chapter has argued that ultimately responsibility has often fallen upon the ability of ethnically diverse communities to absorb asylum seekers.

The conclusion here is, however, that the characterisation of ethnically diverse communities is unique and different types of neighbourhoods may handle dispersal in different ways when it comes to placing asylum seekers, but that preparatory research is needed in every case. Established ethnically diverse inner city communities are generally familiar with many nationalities, religions and cultures living together in close proximity, where predominantly white communities are not, but even with the former, any number of factors may provide for the successful settlement of asylum seekers from the ethnic mix, historical existence, inter-agency communication, pro-activity of residents, to the asylum seeker communities themselves. Within an atmosphere of mutual cooperation, it may follow that the community of

Romantown has the infrastructure in place to negotiate space for groups of asylum seekers coming in, but there also may be points of tension particular to this community. Empirical Chapters Five and Six reflect my fieldwork investigations, in which I hope to identify those elements.

Chapter Four now introduces the methodological approach to this fieldwork investigation.

Chapter 4

Methodology

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide a methodological narrative that describes the direct experience of researching asylum dispersal, which gives an in-depth (although interpretivist and personal) view of events in Romantown. The chapter begins by focussing on the use of qualitative approaches for this kind of study and engages with some of the key methodology literature. This then expands on the uses of an ethnographic approach in particular and the use of the single case study to examine the micro-social dynamics of this dispersal community. Localised studies are introduced in the final part of this section where research on dispersal is placed within a case study context and comparisons are drawn with this project and others. A description of Romantown follows that enables the reader to understand its dynamics in a discursive rather than statistical format, although statistics will be used to present local demographics. Elements, such as local history, housing, immigration, faith and refugee communities, will all be discussed here to provide an understanding of this community.

The next section focuses on fieldwork approaches where the research design is discussed and it looks at how this fits into a multi-method ethnographic approach to study. Interviews, focus groups and participant observation as method are all placed within context, in Romantown, alongside explanations as to how they were managed and any problems encountered.

The penultimate section problematises researching asylum issues by discussing briefly the research interviewer effect. The focus of this section mainly revolves around the positionality of the researcher, an example being my own role as researcher researching sensitive issues in

my own community and how this affected access to respondents and dealing with traumatised groups. The section concludes with ethical considerations taken into account throughout the project.

The concluding section focuses on analysis and the use of grounded theory as an analytical tool and how this process has generated data that has shaped resultant fieldwork chapters.

Ethnography and the Case Study approach

This section begins by discussing reasons for using a qualitative ethnographic research approach for this project. Initially, there will be a discussion on the use of qualitative criteria within an interpretivist tradition in research generally, and discussions on how this fits in with an ethnographic approach to study. Ethnography as a research tradition will be discussed; how this is transposed to a western setting; and why its use within a western setting is particularly suitable for the probing questions on attitude and welcome that are raised within this project. A discussion on the use of case study to research small scale communities like Romantown follows. Comparisons will then be drawn with other studies in this particular field, which leads on to the introduction of the dispersal community of Romantown.

The use of qualitative methodology provides an interpretivist approach to the fieldwork design which assumes the research to be situational where only claims can be made to a particular place and with particular people. Thus it is ideal for a single case study where results are not transferable and there is not the requirement for replicability (Taylor, 2001). As Taylor

observed from an interpretivist viewpoint: ‘all knowledge is considered to be situated, contingent and partial. Truth is unattainable because reality itself is not single or static, and reality is also inevitably influenced and altered by any processes through which a researcher attempts to investigate and represent it’ (Taylor, 2001, p319). The researcher thus acknowledges the reflexivity of this process and the research becomes ongoing and not fixed in time (ibid).

Transcendent terms such as ‘welcome’ and ‘community’ provide, as Taylor put it: ‘the enduring truth’ which is not fixed but of the place and the moment (Taylor, 2001, p319). The ethnographic approach used here is again situational and complements this philosophy, where the researcher immerses him/herself in the field to capture the phenomenon, which is the ‘welcome’ afforded to asylum seekers, and to discover what ‘community’ and ‘governance’ means in Romantown. The choice of using a qualitative ethnographic approach, therefore, arises from the requirement for participation and observation by the researcher in this study, in which the micro-social of human relationships is studied and respondents’ ideas can be pursued. It is the intention to avoid any pre-emptive stereotyping through the use of rigid questioning techniques employed in quantitative study, where findings are external, transferable and measurable through statistical analysis (Taylor, 2001), although survey findings have been used successfully by Robinson and Finney (2007) to measure the more intangible effects of local mood on asylum.

Ethnography

The use of an ethnographic approach, I feel, is most suited to the study of the ethnically diverse character of Romantown and its dispersal of asylum seekers where the main aim is to

replicate the human experience of living here. Ethnography, favoured as a means of study by anthropologists, traditionally tended to create an exoticness of the other by studying native races in colonial countries. However, more recent trends have been to use ethnographic approaches to study micro-community relationships nearer to home. Thus, this approach has been adapted from more traditional anthropological fieldwork techniques used in distant countries, by anthropologists like Fredrik Barth and Gregory Bateson, whose anthropological research featured strongly in Chapter Two (Bauman, 1990, Barth, 1969).

An ethnographic approach has not been used here to exoticise the other however. It is now accepted that ethnographic approaches can incorporate a social science element through which sustained social contact with respondents replicates the human experience of living and working within this community to: ‘ground the phenomena observed in the field’ (Willis and Trondman, 2000, Baszanger and Dodier, 1997, p8). Baszanger and Dodier promoted its flexibility in that the researcher remains open to new evidence rather than rigidly keeping to a fixed schedule that promotes a particular rather than generalist view (ibid). It is ideal, in this situation therefore, where populist discourses regard asylum seekers as bogus and undeserving, but in spatial terms, within Romantown, regard for them may differ, as discussed in Chapter Two and Three (Finney and Robinson, 2007, Carter, 1997, Hall, 1997).

Importantly for this thesis, Willis and Trondman promoted the use of ethnography in capturing an insider view of another culture (Willis and Trondman, 2000); also Okely’s studies on gypsy encampments in the UK promoted the facility of total immersion in the field whilst observing (where she lived with gypsies for a long period of time) (Okely, 1996); and Bourgois advocated its use as opposed to quantitative survey, in that he felt an ethnographic approach suited: ‘the documenting of lives of people who live on the margins of a society that is hostile

to them' (these being Puerto Rican drug users) (Bourgois, 2002, p17, 1995). Bourgois went onto say that: 'only by establishing long term relationships based on trust can one begin to ask provocative personal questions and expect thoughtful serious answers' (ibid). Being a local to Romantown for ten years now has helped guide research questions and understand responses through implicit and shared knowledge on certain topics, such as racism, because I live in the community, although I am not black (Van Dijk, 2001). Implicit understanding will be discussed further under positionality and access in the penultimate section.

It is the notion of the juxtaposition of 'home and away' within this type of ethnographic study, where the researcher rubs shoulders with the researched, which presents interesting dilemmas, where 'other peoples' are my neighbours and the field is all around me, and it becomes difficult to distinguish one from the other (Taylor, 2001, Caputo, 2000). Also, positions of power in this context, between the researcher and researched as 'other', is a consideration where it is 'seldom one of equals' (Taylor, 2002, p3). Taylor gave an example of 'a white person studying people of colour, or more pertinently in my position, an established citizen studying an immigrant population' (asylum seekers) (ibid). Foucault removed concepts of linear thinking on 'race' and dispersal into something far more complex when he observed: 'we are in an epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed..... our experience of the world is less that of a long life developing through time than that of a network that connects points and intersects with its own skein' (Gunaratnum, 2003, Foucault, 1986, p22-3). As far as my own research is concerned, the distance between research and researcher becomes more blurred because I live in this community, and therefore it becomes impossible for me to distance myself from it. However, it is the immediacy of dispersal to Romantown that I seek to capture here from an insider rather than outsider

position. My own position as resident researcher is problematised further in the penultimate section.

Through the use of ethnography, therefore, the aim of this study is to present an insider view when studying micro-community binaries within an ethnically diverse community like Romantown and its settlement of asylum seekers (Taylor 2001, Willis and Trondman, 2000, Baszanger and Dodier, 1997, p8, Okely, 1996, Malinowski, 1922). To aid this, when investigating the responses, reception and the social organisation from an agency, residents' and asylum seeker viewpoint, it is essential not to pre-empt dynamics within the accepting community with prescriptive, rigid questioning. Methodology, therefore, has to allow for flexible, reflexive responses. Methods used that reflect this are semi structured interviews, focus groups and participant observation (discussed further under Fieldwork Approaches)

The level of involvement in the field is also an issue, although again perceived as an advantage in this particular case, where the experience of living in a dispersal community is to be replicated. As resident, researcher, volunteer and observer in this project, all these elements introduce both insight and personal bias. However, they help in establishing long term relationships with volunteer workers, agency representatives, residents and the marginalised group under study which is the asylum seeker population. Through my role as volunteer at the Refugee Advice Centre, I have been able to establish a position of trust with clients, provide a venue where target group respondents have felt at ease within a focus group situation, and been able to ask personal questions on sensitive issues without causing offence, and receiving thoughtful answers in return (Bourgois, 2002, 1995). On involvement, Bourgois said: 'ethnographers usually live in the communities they study, and they establish long-term, organic relationships with the people they write about. In other words, in order to collect

‘accurate data’ ethnographers violate the canons of positivist research; we become intimately involved with the people we study’ (ibid, p16, 1995). Again positionality is discussed further in the penultimate section.

Ethnographic research, in the context of Romantown, provides a more flexible tool for this study and enables a more relaxed approach where I do not have to leave the field. The objective of this approach is to understand cultural meanings rather than just categorise them, and to describe something in great detail (micro-social); to be a researcher as part of the social process rather than a mere observer of it; and to observe the phenomena in its natural setting. As Taylor observed: ‘ethnographic research is said to produce situated knowledge rather than universals and to capture the detail of social life eg, through ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973, cited in Vidich and Lyman, 1998, p78), and ‘slice of life’ accounts (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998b, p15) rather than abstracting from this detail to produce reductive models’ (Taylor, 2002, p3). Thus, the goal of this research is to understand the dynamics of diversity and dispersal in Romantown which through rigorous analysis (discussed in the final section of this chapter) will determine the nature of response to new populations of asylum seekers settling within the community.

Using ethnography as a methodological approach provides a highly reflexive and individual tool in which to study this particular placement of asylum seekers. Although they could still be marginalised and possibly demonized within Romantown, it is the resultant ‘thick description’ provided by ethnographic study that seeks to pre-empt any preconceptions in this respect and overcome dominant discourses on asylum (Taylor, 2002, p3).

Case Study Method

Again the use of case study complemented an ethnographic approach when studying the micro-social dynamics of a small-scale geographically bounded community (13,500 people). As Blaxter et al observed on the use of case study: ‘in many ways, (it is) ideally suited to the needs and resources of the small-scale researcher. It allows, indeed endorses, a focus on just one example, or perhaps just two or three’ (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2001, p71). It also fits well within an ethnographic approach to study a particular phenomenon in broad terms where, as Thomas quoted Curry, Schramm and Yin: ‘an account or analysis of particular events and decisions... can be used to illuminate a decision or set of decisions, why they were taken, how they were implemented, and with what result’ (Thomas, 1998, Curry, 1992, p1, Schramm, 1971, quoted in Yin, 1994, p12). In this case, the phenomenon under study is the placement of asylum seekers in Romantown and the decision to be questioned is the effect of this placement on local community residents and managing agencies.

The use of case study, like ethnography, *also* allows for flexibility of method within a post positivist investigatory framework. Thomas established the flexibility of its use for intensive research but makes the distinction of its methodological position. He quoted Sayer by saying: ‘in terms of the distinction between ‘intensive’ and ‘extensive’ research used by Sayer (1992), and others, case studies are a form of intensive research in that ‘primary questions concern how some causal process works out in a particular case or limited number of cases’, while structured surveys and other extensive methods are ‘mainly concerned with discovering some of the common properties and general patterns in a population as a whole’ (Thomas, 1998, p307, Sayer, 1992, p242). On the flexibility of method used, Thomas observed: ‘the use of case studies is more like a framework for investigation than a specific method. Within that framework you can expect to use several methods, notably semi-structured interviews but also

including data analysis and surveys, if appropriate' (Thomas, 1998). This project however remains within a qualitative research design philosophy by using semi structured interview, focus group and participant observation, although statistics are used to establish demographics.

It is also the idea of using case study for 'challenging cases' (Thomas, 1998) when, as noted, it is particularly appropriate in aiding decision making in dispersal policy. The investigation of the micro-social within Romantown for example, may illuminate the potential for tension within a policy area where assumptions have been made as to elements of suitability of dispersal within ethnically diverse areas for example (Audit Commission 2000c). However, it also presents opportunities to extract examples of good practice within governance which again can be shared across the policy arena. In policy terms, case study, together with other approaches, has already been used to investigate dispersal areas. Therefore, I would like to end this section by focussing on localised studies and discuss briefly the use of this methodology and the focus of research performed in these areas before introducing the dispersal area of Romantown.

To begin, Dawson's research on asylum dispersal to Hull, was also a singular ethnographic study. In demographic terms, Hull differed to Romantown in that Hull is monocultural, although both areas are socio economically deprived (Dawson, 2002). Although some of Dawson's findings were similar with other dispersal studies, there were pertinent observations of interest that emerged on the dynamics of new asylum communities and reasons for asylum drift in Hull. Although local agencies had tried to reinforce asylum networks (promoted by the Audit Commission (2000c)), it was the lack of supportive infrastructure generally that caused drift. He also found that economically deprived monocultural areas were not suitable dispersal

areas (ibid). It was an intense local investigation of Hull however, that had highlighted these particular features, and had also managed to illuminate more generalised findings that would apply to other areas. For example, his research reinforced the importance of existing networks of practiced agencies in the management of tension and conflict within older more established ethnically diverse communities (like Romantown) (Dawson 2002).

However, I felt that other studies on asylum placement although worthy, lacked this commitment to the single case study approach, and were restricted by the use of predominantly quantitative comparative methodologies, and funders' requirements. Finney and Peach's literature review for the Commission for Racial Equality supported this view and critiqued the over use of quantitative survey, and indicated that the lack of qualitative study resulted in a limited understanding of settlement areas (Finney and Peach, 2004). They also noted that empirical studies have failed to address issues of 'othering' Muslim populations where the media have made numerous links between terrorism and asylum (ibid). Importantly for this study, there is anecdotal evidence that tensions exist between asylum seekers and existing ethnic minority communities that have also not been addressed through empirical study (ibid).

D'Onofrio and Munk's research (2003), like my project, concerned itself with the effect that large numbers of dispersed asylum seekers would have on anxious local communities. They presented two case studies that compared very different potential dispersal areas; an ethnically diverse community refugee settlement in Leeds; and a reception centre in Bicester where there had been no previous dispersal. There were similarities in concerns that transcended both communities, however the research suffered ultimately from comparing two demographically different communities where the focus was based more on commonalities (in line with Home

Office integration strategies). However, they concurred with Robinson's studies in Wales, that general lack of information within the UK on asylum and dispersal was a serious problem that has hindered successful refugee integration (D'Onofrio and Munk, 2003, Robinson, 1998). I decided I did not want to draw comparison with another area as I felt that this would channel me into a position of this type of dual analogy. A single study therefore, gives me the freedom to remain open to all eventualities (Hammersley, 1992). Thus, it becomes possible to portray what I feel is a unique opportunity to present what living in Romantown is like for residents (including myself), and asylum seekers, at a time of media and general concern over the asylum issue and multiculturalism generally.

Moran's project, although focused on Salford, concerned destitution and housing. The result was it became a policy indictment particularly aimed at local government, which in case study terms would seem to unbalance the research (Moran, 2003). Her research had focused too heavily on destitution, which was politically a highly contentious local topic, and the research became too emotive as a result. Moran's research fellowship at Salford University was not renewed, and as a result, £200,000 of European Social Fund money had to be returned although she finished her research at a later date via another funder (Dear, 2006). Moran's research is returned to briefly in the penultimate section.

Refugee Action more recently had also tackled the specific problems of destitution, this time across nine cities of the UK. Recommendations, like Moran's, focused on lack of funding to deal with issues like destitution and limitations of statute to provide for this marginalised group (Refugee Action, 2006). Dominant discourses surrounding destitution are generally emotive however (Carter, 1997, Foucault, 1980f). When placed into context within communities like Romantown where strong support networks exist, destitution although still a

serious concern, can be locally perceived as less so. My project, as a single case study, seeks to transcend dominant discourses and illuminate these localised meanings, by placing issues like destitution into context within Romantown, thus placing it more firmly within an interpretivist position

Other single studies on settlement areas included Goodall (2005) who (like my project) described settlement within her own home town of Stoke on Trent. She was forced however, to concentrate on the more negative aspects where settlement was within predominantly white neighbourhoods and where antagonism towards new settlements of Iraqi Kurds was apparent and expected (Goodhall, 2005). She, like Dawson, faced the problems of integration of asylum seekers in poor monocultural areas where, as she observed in Stoke, even local residents were very territorial (Goodhall, 2005, Dawson, 2002).

Larger Home Office funded studies on the reception of asylum seekers (Zetter et al, 2002b); on integration frameworks (Agar and Strang, 2004); and on barriers for refugees in employment and training (Bloch, 2002), covered vast areas but pre-empted what they set out to find by focussing on specific policy areas, and again were forced to generalise results across a variety of demographics. Small local studies to my project, on the other hand, have kept it simple and provided valuable information by focussing on skills audits and mapping projects, which have proved to be an invaluable research tool. Although they do not have the status of larger studies and perhaps have not produced the richness of data of some localised case studies, they offer different types of knowledge and insights locally (Fox, 2006, Pearce, Pearce and Wynne, 2005, Subhra, 2002, Aldridge and Waddington, 2002).

The use of a single case study within an ethnographic approach rather than the use of other forms of methodology are promoted here to investigate dispersal areas like Romantown, where the aim is to capture what life is like for residents, managing agencies and asylum seekers. Its research justification therefore is a descriptive examination of the particular dynamics of communities that flags up local concerns, but is also able to present more generalised findings. The reliability of data (although not generaliseable within the positivist tradition), can be transferred from one setting to another on the basis of 'fit', and can also contribute to a wider pattern of qualitative studies and findings (Hammersley, 2003, Stake, 1994, 1978, Donmoyer, 1990, Lincoln and Guba 1985). Its use also joins other qualitative studies, discussed here, to create the bigger picture on asylum dispersal.

The final part of this section concerns itself with an introduction to Romantown as the single case study area for investigation and the research environment for this study. The chapter then proceeds to the next main section where fieldwork approaches and methods used are discussed.

The dispersal community of Romantown

Romantown is a suburb of approximately 13,500 people at the heart of a Midlands City which numbers around 250,000 (Office of National Statistics (ONS), 2006). As discussed in Chapter One, Romantown from a socio-economic viewpoint is a poor ward, and is placed within the final quartile of deprivation on all scales except barriers to housing (ONS, 2007). These statistics however, underestimate its strong middle class Asian presence which is indicated by the large numbers of small businesses in the area (1145) (ibid). Politically there has been a Labour council in Denton city for many years and Romantown has a high profile Labour MP.

The durability of the Labour Party and its ability to remain in power locally has been demonstrated through coalescence with both Liberal Democrat and most recently Conservative city councillors (*Guardian*, 31 May, 2007).

Pakistani Muslims, African Caribbean and Punjabi Sikhs began arriving for work and education here from the 1950s onwards; Asians expelled from Uganda and the Vietnamese boat people arrived in the 1970s and 1980s; Kosovans, Bosnians and Albanians as refugees from the Balkan conflicts in the 1990s; and out of county placements by Kent County Council of asylum seekers from 2001 to 2003. Dispersal of asylum seekers stopped here in 2003 but resumed again in January 2006. The final dispersal only allowed family groups to settle in Romantown as a result of rising tensions between the previous dispersal of single young Kurdish males and Pakistani and Sikh residents (Asylum Seekers Statutory Multi Agency Forum Meeting, 2005). It was reported by the Asylum Seeker Project Officer, at the most recent Refugee Forum meeting, that dispersal had practically stopped now (Denton Refugee Forum, July 2007). Statistically, the resident populations of predominant groups in Romantown is 47% white, 15% Indian (of which 14% are Punjabi Sikh), 20% Pakistani Muslim, and 5% African Caribbean (Weller and Wolfe, 2003, ONS, 2001). Local Romantown statistics are covered in greater depth in the first main section of Chapter Five. Within the refugee and asylum communities, there are a total of 1109 asylum seekers in Denton City (officially), of which 425 are Section 95 and 118 are Section 4 (EMCARS, 2007, Denton Refugee Forum, March, 2007). A large number of Section 4 are young Iraqi Kurd males.

The majority of housing stock in Romantown consists of rows of red terraced houses that reveal its Victorian origins. Locally it is known as an area of ethnic concentration, mainly Asian and latterly an area where asylum seekers were settled in the city. Because of the

density of its ethnic diversity, it is anecdotally regarded as a marker for ethnic difference and loosely termed as ‘the ghetto’ by people living inside and outside the community (Hawkins and Fox, 2004). Since the placement of asylum seekers in 2001, the national press have referred to Romantown as: ‘the Frontline (where) rather than trenches and barbed wire, the battleground is marked by a mini-roundabout through which traffic grinds between world-weary red brick terraces’ (*Daily Mail*, Saturday, January 3, 2004). However Hawkins and Fox would disagree with this determination, and have sought to deconstruct the ghettoisation of Romantown in their attempt to promote it as a place of intercultural exchange (Hawkins and Fox, 2004).

I have lived in Romantown for ten years now. I moved here with a certain amount of trepidation from a leafy suburb south west of the city centre. Although I had lived in the Middle and Far East, I was not sure what to expect. I came to realise that Romantown is a community of communities, and certain streets become signifiers for the national groups that live here. My own house is situated in a street that historically had been predominantly Irish Roman Catholic, reflected by the proximity of the Roman Catholic church at the top of the road (see Fig 1 at the end of this chapter). In a neighbouring street there are mainly Punjabi Sikhs and across another road, it is mainly Pakistani Muslim and, as with my street, an indicator as to who lives in a particular street could be the siting of a local gurdwara (Sikh temple), mosque, community centre or who owns the corner shop. My corner shop is owned by a Sikh couple. Mrs Singh was born in Romantown and speaks English, as expected, like a native. Her husband on the other hand, came to England after they married, having lived in the Punjab for most of his life and also having worked in Jordan for six years. His English was not very good but, by chance, I realised that he spoke some Arabic, so he and I would exchange a few words much to our mutual amusement.

It is perhaps the shop fronts on Romantown Road in the heart of the suburb that most immediately reflect the changing dynamics over time of this community and different cultural groups that live here. Long term residents' recalled (anecdotally and via resident focus group) mainly English shops here in the 1970s, but increased migration into the area had brought Indian, Pakistani, Chinese and African Caribbean entrepreneurship and latterly Kurdish and Polish shops to the area. Brightly lit gold shops are also a feature and illuminate the street in the evening then disappear behind safety blinds the next morning. Other signifiers to diversity here are Asian restaurants and clothes shops, Kurdish coffee houses, hairdressers and shops (which reflect the large numbers of Kurdish asylum seekers who arrived from 2001 onwards), the juxtaposition of gurdwaras, mosques, churches and temples and the predominance of cultural dress. Anecdotally, different nationalities that live here range around 60 with more languages spoken, many of these being creolised dialects that have no formal recognition (Hawkins and Fox, 2004). Pakistani and Indian Sikh communities create the character here, but Romantown's majority is white, and yet outside impressions of Romantown are that it is an Asian community. Apart from resident populations of Punjabi Sikhs and Pakistanis and asylum and refugee populations of mainly Iraqi Kurds, there are asylum populations from Iran, Somalia, Sudan, Congo, Eritrea, Afghanistan, Cameroon, Zimbabwe, and Zaire; refugee communities from Vietnam and Bosnia; post WWII immigrants from the Ukraine, Italy and Poland; and workforces from the new EU accession countries of Poland, Romania and Albania. (For geographical placements of some RCO memberships see Fig 1). Romantown presents an historical picture of immigration that charts its progress from WWII continually introducing new nations into this already kaleidoscopic community and, like the kaleidoscope, the picture continually changes.

As with many ethnically diverse/inner city areas, the housing stock of Romantown can look old and tired. Apart from the red terraced houses which form the largest majority of homes, there are extravagant civic structures, churches and large houses among these rows which historically map Romantown's past. Many church halls have since been converted into mosques and gurdwaras, but impressive new mosques and gurdwaras have been built, reflecting the wealth of the Pakistani Muslim and Indian Sikh communities. The corner shop still exists but the names above the door are Asian. As previously stated, asylum groups are also increasingly apparent within this community. Instead of the Kurdish Community Centre being the epicentre of the Kurdish asylum and refugee community, it is the Kurdish Corner Coffee House, which exhibits a sign above the door declaring *Everyone Welcome*, where most people met. The Iraqi Kurds are now the largest group of asylum seekers to come and live here with numbers fluctuating between 600-1500 depending on which agency you approach, as official local authority statistics are conflated by an approximated number provided by the local refugee advice centre (DRAC, 2006, DCC, 2003).

Romantown Road is brightly decorated from September through to March, celebrating Guy Fawkes, Diwali, Visaiki, Eid, and Christmas, with fireworks being lit for each celebration. The centre of this seething community, however, is not a multicultural centre but a supermarket (Hawkins and Fox, 2004). Opened ten years ago at the bottom of Romantown Road, it attracts people from inside and outside the community and even outside the city itself (Fig 1). The shop is run by six Pakistani brothers but manages to cater for a good cross section of the populations of Romantown. Much of the regeneration of Romantown Road is due to the presence and success of this supermarket.

Fieldwork approaches

To be able to capture the experience and feelings of this vibrant community, a traditional multi-method ethnographic approach has been used. Semi structured interview and focus group questions arose from my original ideas and were guided by theoretical and policy literature which sought to initially ground the research and aid analysis (Hammersley, 1995). A three pronged approach of semi structured interview, focus group and participant observation is used to ensure rigour where researcher bias (in my case as a resident of the community) is bound to emerge. Measures of appropriateness of instruments used are discussed later in this section, but the section begins by discussing the research design itself.

Research Design

As stated, the project was primarily designed around a well developed theoretical and policy basis from where my research ideas have emerged and which have guided areas of investigation and assisted with analysis. In determining the type of welcome that asylum seekers received within a settlement community particularly, issues surrounding community dynamics were also taken into account when determining the lines of questioning (discussed further in the final section under analysis). Although my ideas were initially grounded in this way, my research design using an ethnographic approach and reflexive forms of method provided plenty of scope for an analysis where the use of grounded theory meant that new areas of interest could emerge. Glaser and Strauss (cited by Hammersley) although promoting ideas of self generating data in their grounded theoretical approach to analysis, admitted that ‘considerable progress can sometimes be made in clarifying and developing research problems before fieldwork begins’ (Hammersley, 1995, p25). With this in mind, semi structured interviews and focus group schedules mimicking my original ideas guided the respondents

within certain areas of investigation. However, these questions were mere suggestions and respondents were left to pursue their own paths and questioning took the line of least resistance. The interviews took place before the observation had started, and the focus groups were performed during and at the end of the observation. Thus ideas had already started to build on the theoretical and policy driven concepts. These ideas fed into the daily diary sheets which were produced from the observation and any minutes used from Refugee Forum meetings.

The research design, as previously stated, came out of the interpretivist canon and followed an accepted ethnographic methodological format in which the main aim was to build a story around the phenomenon of dispersal to Romantown. The case study also became a revelatory case as no such in-depth study has been performed here, where dispersal of asylum seekers is a relatively recent phenomenon to be studied (Thomas, 1998). The semi structured interviews, focus group and participant observation all became part of the observation of the phenomena in the field and were aimed towards building a rapport with respondents, to extricate rich data. The establishment of this rapport was observed by Bourgois who said: 'Ethnographers usually live in the communities they study, and they establish long-term, organic relationships with the people they write about' (Bourgois, 2002, p16, 1995). To accomplish this, Bourgois' research design focused on interviews and observations within local crack houses and in people's homes over a period of many months. However, within a more formal arena, he also interviewed local politicians and attended meetings very much in line with my own project (ibid). The design of the three methods used in my project is based on suitability but also takes into account the need to build a lasting rapport with the respondents as my observation as resident researcher continues. The methods used therefore are based on their suitability to agency response (interview), resident and asylum seeker response (focus group), and to

capture the phenomenon of dispersal through the workings of a poorly funded charity (observation). These instruments and their uses are discussed in detail next.

Semi-structured interviews

Semi structured interviews took place with key members (gatekeepers) of the community. The same general questions were asked to each respondent but as already stated were open ended in that they allowed the respondent to lead the discussion in whatever way they wished. However they were prompted to discuss certain research areas when discussions on other topics had become exhausted.

Respondents from this group included faith, refugee and community leaders (a Sikh community leader, the Persian community leader, a local Pakistani businessman and his Kurdish friend, and a local Imam from the Pakistani community); statutory agencies (Asylum Seeker Project Officer at the local city council, the local constabulary, NHS, local academic, local multi-faith centre director); voluntary agencies (refugee advice centre, local media charity); and government agency responsible for the dispersal of asylum seekers (two Regional NASS representatives).

It was decided to use semi-structured interviews for these gatekeeper respondents because it was a more formalised way of managing semi/professional agencies in a professional setting (their offices). It was also a useful way to gain knowledge about local asylum issues from agency and individual viewpoints and to observe their operation. Initially, the selection of respondents for interview came via recommendation through an academic colleague (Dr Buller) who knew Romantown well (used to live and work here, had written on local asylum

issues and had mapped the area for services); via the Refugee Advice Centre where I performed my observation; and through my own contacts. As far as suitability of respondents was concerned, these people also adhered to Atkinson's definition, in this context, of: 'actors with control over key sources and avenues of opportunity,' that is, individuals who have a measure of management or at the very least informed knowledge of asylum dispersal within the community (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995, Atkinson 1981b, p34).

Initially respondents were approached by telephone. All interviews were performed at their place of work, except for Nasir the young Pakistani businessman and Ahmed his Kurdish friend who came to my home, and John, the Refugee Advice Centre respondent, whose interview took place at his home. Only two out of ten respondents refused to be audio taped, both from statutory agencies; the local council (Asylum Seeker Project Officer, city council), and the regional National Asylum Seeker Support (NASS) representatives. The police were approached for interview, but refused. However, after some persuasion on my part, they provided edited policy procedures for dealing with asylum seekers in the city. As the project progressed, however, I came into contact with the police on regular occasions at the bi-monthly Refugee Forum meetings (where I continue to take minutes), and the statutory multi agency forum meetings where, on both occasions, regular reports on asylum management locally were given by them. The minutes of the Refugee Forum meetings have provided added data for me to work with and have kept my research current.

I felt that respondents were all interested in the project and were willing to contribute. Also being a local resident helped here because of my shared knowledge of community issues and therefore a presumed interest on my part. Through having worked at the local university, I already had connections with the local multi-faith centre and I received extensive support from

Dr Buller (who acted as a respondent, signposted the research, provided contacts at the Refugee Advice Centre, and also helped me to access the Sikh community). I also had family connections within the local Pakistani community, thus access to predominant minority ethnic groups was well balanced.

It was anticipated that because of the cross section of respondents and the semi structure of the interview schedule, data produced would supply multiple histories and thick descriptions on the same topic (Gunaratnam, 2003). The concern here was to be fair to all respondents in ensuring they all received the same questions as far as possible, but, as noted, the facility was there for respondents to branch off into different areas of interest if they so wished. An information sheet was provided (see Appendix One). For a copy of the interview schedule see Appendix Two.

There were ten interviews in total, each lasting between 1-2 hours. Jacky, the Asylum Seeker Project Officer at the local council, made amendments to the initial transcript of events, but her remarks were helpful. Respondents were generally relaxed during the course of the interviews and were quite willing to talk. All respondents were guaranteed anonymity (Appendix One), signed a consent form (Appendix Three), and were offered copies of transcripts. There were instances where my desire to probe rather than take the line of least resistance meant that there was a danger of guiding proceedings too strongly, but I was aware of this and made continued efforts to maintain the free-flow of the interview.

Focus Groups

These two groups consisted of a mixed nationality group of asylum seekers, and a mixed ethnicity from the indigenous resident population in Romantown. The use of focus groups in this project again complied with a qualitative multi-method ethnographic approach which advocates the use of group and single interviewing in parallel with observation method (Morgan, 1997, Willis, 1977). It also provided another methodological dynamic, this time for collective conversation, deemed appropriate in the context of a study of locationality and community in this instance, and an opportunity for residents to speak about dispersal. It provided a more public forum from the one to one setting of the semi-structured interview yet a more structured environment than pure observation (Morgan, 1997).

Initially, the intention was to mix residents with asylum seekers, but it was ultimately felt that this might have inhibited responses or alternatively could have led to tensions. There were also ethical considerations covering the research of vulnerable groups, which had to be taken into account, and which will be discussed further in the penultimate section of this chapter. Ultimately both groups benefited from separate situations, and this, in turn, provided a richer source of data. In line with the use of focus group as a complementary method to the semi structured interview, questions to both groups followed a similar design to the interview schedule topics (differing only within the asylum seeker group which included their own views on their integration into Romantown). Data from the focus groups had produced more personal (insider) accounts of local community issues and dispersal by residents and asylum seekers that contrasted with interviews in which a majority of gatekeepers lived outside the community.

The role I played here was more one of facilitator rather than interviewer. Again my own researcher bias could have dominated proceedings and influenced the interactions of the groups. However I found that my role as resident researcher again resulted in empathetic responses from the groups and produced rich data as a result (Morgan, 1997).

Asylum seekers' focus group

The asylum seeker group was the first to be conducted and took place at the Refugee Advice Centre where the observation was performed. The choice of the advice centre for the venue was based on one of the main criteria for using a focus group which was to provide a setting that was known to respondents (Morgan, 1997). Each respondent received a £10 voucher and vegetarian snacks were provided. I felt uncomfortable providing vouchers to asylum seekers because of Section 4 links where vouchers were provided (via the 1999 Act) for failed asylum seekers. However it was explained to them that the vouchers given were of general value rather than Section 4 vouchers that were targeted towards a specific group. The group knew the advice centre as a place of safety and somewhere where they received help from the volunteers. They also knew me as a volunteer rather than a researcher which relaxed them and helped with my investigation. The room where the focus group meeting took place was often used as an informal meeting place by them and was a place where they could talk with friends. So these elements all added to the establishment of a relaxed setting.

This focus group had an added dimension of translators which allowed for different nationalities of asylum seekers to talk to each other. Initially I had intended for the discussion to be conducted in English, but a majority of the Kurdish respondents and one of the Cameroonians could not speak English well. Therefore, for the Kurdish respondents, a Sorani (Kurdish) interpreter attended the meeting. He was a regular volunteer at the Refugee Advice

Centre, known by me, and trusted by the Kurdish clients. He also provided the Kurdish respondents for the meeting. The Cameroonian respondent, who was also the leader of the Cameroonian Association, acted as French translator for his friend. He had later become Chair of the Refugee Forum and was also known by me and the Kurdish interpreter. The presence of translators alleviated any concerns over misunderstandings that could have occurred although the meeting became protracted and complicated because of the constant need for translation (Gumperz, 2001). Also, as a result of the Sorani translator's strong accent, transcribing tapes was difficult. All groups agreed however that they had benefited from the meeting and that sharing concerns across cultures had been a good experience for them. The Kurdish respondents felt that they benefitted from meeting other nationalities of asylum seeker and the Cameroonian leader was able to add another dimension outside their own networks. Culley, Hudson and Rapport had split their focus groups by language and used language specific facilitators to ensure accurate translation when using focus groups with ethnic minorities to investigate sensitive topics, where they suggested that research within focus groups is interrupted by translators (Culley, Hudson and Rapport, 2007, Chiu and Knight, 1999). My focus group could have been split into different language groups for ease but responses were forthcoming, and all respondents commented to me at the end of the meeting that they felt the benefit of cross cultural exchange, where general concerns over dispersal could be shared with other asylum seekers in their own language. Traditionally interviews are considered the favourite method when tackling sensitive issues (Culley et al, 2007, Farquhar, 1999, Carey, 1995, Kitzinger, 1995, 1994, O'Brien, 1993), however Culley found that focus groups engendered rather than inhibited discussion, as was the case here (ibid).

The constituency of this focus group attempted to mirror the demographics of the clientele that passed through the Refugee Advice Centre (mainly Kurdish). Therefore it was made up of five

young Kurdish males, two young male Cameroonians, and an older Zimbabwean male. It was hoped to have a young Eritrean woman join the group but she was not able to come, so the group had no female respondent. She was experiencing problems of eviction at that time and also her presence would have required an Arabic translator (also an advice centre volunteer) who was not available either on that day due to eviction problems of his own.

The focus group meeting lasted between 1-2 hours. Constant cross translation meant that content information for analysis provided from these respondents, was less than the residents' focus group. Also the Sorani translator's English was not fluent, so responses were quite stunted. Most of the Kurdish respondents did not have refugee status. Some were Section 4 and some had had their asylum claims rejected completely, so no names were used in this group interview. However it was significant that they agreed to meet with me, and although data from the group was limited, responses were enthusiastic. An information sheet in English was provided to the translators, prior to the meeting, for translation where anonymity was guaranteed (see Appendix Four), and all signed consent agreements (Appendix Three). For a copy of Asylum Seekers Focus Group schedule see Appendix Five.

Residents' focus group

The residents' focus group took place when my observation at the Refugee Advice Centre had officially finished. The venue for this group was a local primary school in Romantown and was accessible for all respondents from the residents' group. No refreshments were provided, as unfortunately only water was allowed to be brought onto the premises at the primary school, but there were cordoned off play facilities for children accompanying respondents and, like the asylum seeker group, each respondent received a £10 voucher.

As the object of the research was to determine local responses and reactions that asylum seekers would receive in Romantown, the group consisted of what I considered to be a reasonable cross section of local populations, where respondents were white (4) (although two of these were Muslim), African Caribbean (1), Pakistani Muslim (2), and Sikh (1) (see earlier local statistics of predominant groups). Certain members of the public had expressed interest in future research, when filling in an attitude questionnaire for my master's study, so these people were approached first to see if they would be willing to join the focus group. As it transpired none of these original people were available. Eventually, with the help of my daughter who lives locally, I managed to recruit ten people. Two of these, including my daughter, offered to look after any children whilst the meeting progressed. The focus group took place in the evening which seemed generally to suit everyone. Respondents were referred to by name, but pseudonyms have been used here. The constituency of the group was as follows: Jill is an employed, white, middle aged, married female academic who has lived in Romantown for 28 years and is a friend and colleague of mine; Alice is a semi-retired, self-employed, white, married female who has lived in Romantown for 40 years and was a neighbour to my daughter; Cheryl is an employed, dual heritage African Caribbean, female, single parent in her mid thirties and has recently moved into Romantown from Bedfordshire and is also a neighbour to my daughter and Alice; Aiyesha is a white, married, female Muslim convert in her early thirties who originally lived in the city of Denton, although not in Romantown, went to live in France, met her French Muslim convert husband and returned to live in Romantown; Abdullah, Aiyesha's husband is employed, white, French, in his mid thirties. They are both neighbours of mine and friends of me and my daughter; Nuzrat is a British Pakistani Muslim female, married in her early thirties with six children and has lived in Romantown all her life. She is my daughter's sister in law; Sima is a British born Indian Sikh female in her late twenties who is a student at the local university, was born in Romantown,

married and has moved out to an adjacent suburb. She was sent to me by Dr Buller; Bushra is a single British born Pakistani Muslim female in her early twenties, is also a student of Dr Buller's and lives in Romantown with her parents; Mumtaz, my daughter, is a white female Muslim convert in her late twenties, married with (now) two children to a British Pakistani Muslim (who is the brother of Nasir the young businessman interviewed) and has lived in or near Romantown for most of her life; and finally Yasmina, again Mumtaz' sister in law and sister to Nuzrat is a British Pakistani Muslim female in her early twenties, also married with one child and has lived in Romantown all her life. Mumtaz and Yasmina looked after the children and did not participate in the group discussion.

Like the asylum focus group schedule, the residents' schedule of questions followed a similar line of enquiry to that of the semi structured interview schedule (see copy of Residents' Focus Group schedule Appendix Six), and an information sheet was provided (Appendix Seven) where confidentiality was guaranteed, and consent form signed by respondents (Appendix Three). The meeting became noisier as the focus group proceeded because of the proximity of the crèche, but the discussion was animated and rich data was gathered, although again transcription of tapes was difficult. Although there was a cross section of diversity, no translators were required as all respondents spoke English well.

In both focus group situations, I was concerned that the use of recorders could be quite intrusive although this did not seem to be the case. The asylum seeker group could have felt intimidated but generally were relaxed within the advice centre setting, and seemed pleased to reveal their stories in a public forum meeting. All of the resident respondents generally had positive things to say about asylum dispersal in the community and all residents, without

exception, enjoyed living in Romantown. Responses on settlement from asylum seekers however were more mixed in that respect.

Participant Observation

This took place within Denton Refugee Advice Centre. It was six months in duration and I was present there on the days it was open (Tuesdays and Thursdays) from 10 am to 4 pm. The use of participant observation formed the third part of the methods triad for this project and again was designed to complement the multi-method ethnographic approach (Morgan, 1997). My intention was to immerse myself in the field by volunteering in a frontline firefighting refugee advice centre where all, or any, requests for help were considered from the refugee and asylum populations of Romantown. I felt that this poorly funded voluntary organisation provided an effective conduit for researching asylum issues in Romantown from where a holistic picture of governance in the community could be observed via the advice centre itself and also via the Refugee Forum which was attached to the centre. The observation in the advice centre also provided an invaluable snapshot of the issues and challenges of asylum seekers and practitioners working at the centre (which are explored further in the latter part of Chapter Six). It also transpired to be a good position from where to study the difficult to access Kurdish community. This group, who according to official and unofficial figures (discussed earlier in the chapter and more fully in Chapter Six) formed the largest percentage of refugees and asylum seekers in Denton, were reluctant to create a visible RCO, and remained hard to access in policy terms. My presence as observer at the centre also readily provided me with a translator and respondents from the Kurdish and other refugee and asylum seeker communities for the asylum seekers' focus group, thus the observation enabled rigour through triangulation, where I could observe the Kurdish community at the Refugee Advice

Centre and could also question them via the asylum seeker focus group. My own insider position as a Romantown resident, meant that I quickly became an accepted part of the centre (where I knew the area), and a trusted part of the agency community that assisted asylum seekers in Romantown. (Trust by the Kurdish/asylum seeker and the agency communities would also be via my own acceptance into the Refugee Advice Centre by the senior case workers who were highly regarded). This closeness and trust presented benefits and problems however, which are examined further under *positionality and access* later in this chapter. Thus my observation here was crucial for access and gave a more rounded view.

As stated above, it was also from this centre that the voluntary Refugee Forum was organised and met bi-monthly to discuss management strategy issues. The Refugee Advice Centre was held in regard by the asylum population as well as the statutory and voluntary sector agencies alike. My position, as researcher, was known to the members of the forum from the beginning and the minutes ultimately enriched the thesis, although direct quotes have not been used. Because of the inextricable link between the Refugee Advice Centre and the Refugee Forum, taking minutes at the Forum became part of the skills I was able to provide in exchange for my observation at the Refugee Advice Centre (I discuss trade offs later in the chapter under *researcher role*). It also provided an invaluable insight into the local agency dynamics of the Refugee Forum. Minute taking was also key to my successful exit from this poorly funded agency when my observation was completed, as I still continue taking forum minutes to this day.

The Refugee Advice Centre was sited within the offices of the Bosnian Centre (also home to Refugee Forum), situated on the fringe of Romantown (see Fig 1). The advice centre was set up by two individuals (one remains as a volunteer case worker) and came into existence

because there was no Refugee Action presence in the city, except for a weekly surgery at the council offices. The centre came into being to support the local law centre (Fig 1) by catering for non legal requests for help which included: signposting clients, answering letters, providing food to the destitute and managing Section 4 applications for financial and accommodation support. There were no paid workers and all staff were volunteers. Latterly Refugee Action has acquired funding to employ a dedicated worker for Romantown, but this worker is to be placed in another location away from the advice centre (Denton Refugee Forum, July, 2007). Most of the volunteers in the advice centre are white, from Christian affiliated organisations, middle class and retired or semi-retired professionals. There is also a volunteer translator (Sorani) from the Iraqi Kurd community, a volunteer Egyptian caseworker who also acts as an Arabic translator, and a volunteer French translator/receptionist who helps with French speaking African clients. Considering the diversity of Romantown, there is a dearth of minority ethnic volunteers here.

There were difficulties as well as advantages with this observation. My local knowledge helped me to signpost asylum seeker clients to respective managing agencies reasonably well, but nothing prepared me for the constant barrage of problems, and observing detachedly became very difficult. I remained convinced, however, that participant observation within this advice centre was a particularly suitable method to document the problems associated with asylum seeking in Romantown and to observe the workings of this particular charity. I quickly became established as the administrator rather than the researcher and I felt comfortable with this role, as most of the volunteers were not computer literate and had difficulties in using the only computer in the office. Thus, my presence was of benefit to the volunteer team rather than an issue. Also, from this position, I was able to observe more objectively. However, this strategy only worked up to a point where fieldwork fatigue presented real problems for me and

I frequently dreaded the pressures of going in (Hammersley, 1995, Everhart, 1977). My fieldwork observations were recorded on a daily basis, usually in the afternoon when numbers of clients had subsided. The ambiguities of my researcher role were also integrated into the daily diary (discussed next). The sheets were dated and used for analysis based on codes formulated through interview and focus groups. Observations in the diary were usually based around stories of clients' predicaments and the attempts of volunteers to help them. These observations were stored on my home computer.

A typical day amounted to an informed discussion with the senior caseworker, Jonathan (who has since left), where he would bring me up to date with local recent events. As the morning progressed and client numbers rose, my computer skills were called upon frequently to write letters for a range of issues, such as requests for Section 4 support; fax requests for interviews for replacement identity cards which had been mislaid, lost or stolen; requests to the local social fund for furniture and white goods; letters to solicitors to re-establish paper trails on appeals; and maintaining up to date lists for housing providers of Section 4 clients. Somewhere within the general milieu and the constant stream of clients, we would be provided with highly nutritious salad buns, on the house, for lunch.

Daily diary and researcher role

As stated, one of my main aims was to understand the workings of the Refugee Advice Centre, and I had assumed that through observation, this would be quite straightforward. However, fairly soon I realised, it would be impossible for me to purely observe because of the centre's fire-fighting nature and all help was needed. Like Bourgois, I became heavily involved in the field quite quickly and experienced difficulties when attempting to document within this emotive atmosphere where every case involved people surviving on very little. As Bourgois

observed: ‘the self destructive daily life of those who are surviving on the street needs to be contextualized in the particular history of the hostile race relations and structural economic dislocation they have faced’ (Bourgois, 2002, p18). It also became hard to bring the whole into context when dealing with basic survival when frustration could also produce irritation towards the clients’ situation and their inability to help themselves. Again, as Bourgois observed: ‘I often experience a confusing anger with the victims, the victimizers and the wealthy industrialized society that generates such an unnecessarily large toll of human suffering’, where he found himself blaming the crack addict not the system (ibid). I also felt guilt and frustration at my own position of privilege, the futility of the system, and my inability to help asylum seekers significantly.

As noted, my role evolved from researcher volunteer caseworker to researcher volunteer administrator within a matter of a few weeks. At this stage, I was also asked to take minutes at the Refugee Forum meetings (as previously discussed). I found that being the administrator acted as a buffer and enabled me to distance myself from the difficulties and challenges of helping clients, and also provided me with a good vantage point from where to observe the dynamics of the centre and make notes in my diary. Minute taking at the bi-monthly Refugee Forum meetings also provided the opportunity of observing governance in action, as the Refugee Forum had become the main multi agency conduit for dispersal in Romantown (discussed in Chapter Six) (Denton Refugee Forum, July, 2007). At that stage, I had also been voted on as Secretary of the Management Committee and this gave me legitimate access to the executive decision making of the Refugee Advice Centre and Refugee Forum. Initially the forum meetings were quite daunting as the membership stretched to around fifty people and represented managing agencies from the local statutory and voluntary sectors plus most of

Romantown's refugee community organisations (RCOs). The meetings usually took 2 hours and provided me with opportunities to talk with forum members.

My involvement at the Refugee Advice Centre and the Refugee Forum had grown very quickly and my regular presence was relied on. I often experienced feelings of guilt if I had to take an afternoon off to attend a meeting and Mary, the senior volunteer caseworker, was never very pleased when I did. Permission to observe came with an expectation of help. There were also high incidences of stress experienced by volunteers (including myself) and clients alike. Often it was the client that had caused the initial problem when documents were lost and access to the Home Office, from the advice centre, was difficult and protracted via a borrowed fax from the Bosnian Centre office and a single phone line. Clients could become quite agitated during these prolonged sessions but the volunteers just pressed on. Although I had managed to distance myself from clients, I always remained in the same room as volunteers and clients so that I could observe what was going on.

On occasions, however, I would deal with clients directly when volunteers were busy. It was always difficult as the following vignette from my diary demonstrates:

The man from Zimbabwe came in. He is in a position where he is expected to return and of course, cannot work, but we have done him a CV anyway. It is interesting to talk about Zimbabwe because I remember when it was Rhodesia and Ian Smith was in power.....It was interesting to talk to him about Africa. I have never been but I have a friend who lives in Botswana. It is a place that I have always wanted to go to. He was telling me about his family. His mother died whilst he was in this country but his father is still alive and nearly 100 years of age. He has a wife and five children living in Zimbabwe. His wife cannot walk and three of his children are still dependent on him. He has also lost a child. He does voluntary work now at the Cathedral but needs to find paid work. Of course, this is not allowed but the CV may help in some way. He is a very nice man. I would like to give him some gardening work but of course I can't (5 May, 2005)

I was told by volunteers later, that he had never told any of them that he had lost a child, so I felt quite privileged to be confided in, in this way. Everyone liked Gilbert, but they were in the

same position as me in that they were not able to get too involved, although they regularly gave him food and were always nice to him.

It was also hard not to become disgruntled with other volunteers when things became hectic. I relied on them or at least the good offices of the senior caseworker, Mary, to complete my observation. Again it was my computer skills that provided the trade off, although I still find her attitude to most people (including me) rather harsh. As Hey observed on maintaining access: ‘my fieldwork effectively involved a series of complex trade-offs. In the course of the study, the girls and I developed an implicit micro-economy of exchange and barter. The girls provided access to their social lives in return for certain tangible goods’ (Hey, 2002, p74, Skeggs, 1994). My administrative skills were the ‘tangible goods’ and therefore became the bartering point for my continued presence in the advice centre.

As my observation drew to a close, I knew leaving would prove difficult as I had become an integral part of this organisation. I decided to continue as volunteer on Thursdays but because of pressure of PhD work, I have not been able to maintain this. I had also found my observation at the Refugee Advice Centre very difficult and, at times confusing, when I felt my role as a researcher was being compromised. The daily diary I kept helped to anchor my research, and I managed to transcribe my day into useful data format, which in the main created something descriptive for me to work with and is presented as vignettes in Chapter Six. There were occasions, however, when my scholarly observations ended up as a daily moan. Through my brief contact with clients initially, I found their experiences too difficult to manage and was grateful to pass on this burden to the volunteer caseworkers. However, although I experienced a sense of failure in the beginning, in retrospect I realised that I had managed to preserve a measure of separateness and avoided getting too involved. As Caroline

Knowles observed when performing fieldwork in her own neighbourhood: ‘sociologists like myself routinely excavate their own backyards, yet effect a similar, though less dramatically spatialized distinction’ (Knowles, 2000, p55). Knowles had ultimately become concerned when two of her research assistants had brought clients into her place of work (university) to be interviewed (discussed again in next section). Although the day centre, where the research was being undertaken, was in close proximity to her place of work, she felt that the division had been breached. My own fear was to become too emotionally involved with this desperate, marginalised group, but I feel that I have managed (through a process of constant negotiation) to remain separate and to maintain a certain amount of objectivity without compromising the interpretivist canon where researcher bias is accepted. I had thus managed to observe the workings of the advice centre and its involvement in dispersal management in Romantown from an insider’s viewpoint when I had become part of this poorly funded charity for a while.

Problematizing research into asylum issues

Although problems of over involvement have already been broached in the previous section, there are other more general and specific problems on researching marginalised groups, such as asylum seekers, that need to be raised here. As already discussed, difficult issues such as destitution, can result in real dilemmas for the researcher, as was the case with Moran in Salford (Moran, 2003). Other asylum research by Bloch, Zetter et al, Robinson et al and Dawson, however did not necessarily reflect on these potential pitfalls that can occur. It is the difficulties and benefits that I encountered that are discussed here. The first half of this section approaches this from my own position as a resident academic working in the field which is

also my home, and the second half broaches ethical issues that I was obliged to consider when researching asylum seekers.

Positionality and access

The symmetry debate of the researched and the researcher these days becomes rather an outdated one. The race-of-interviewer effect on whether a same race researcher may gain better access to her respondents is therefore superseded here in my case where the researcher is a resident researching her own community. Therefore it may be more productive to discuss this from the position of insider and outsider and the potential pitfalls and disadvantages of being so closely and personally involved in the community that I studied.

The ethnographic approach here is conventional in that, as a local (instead of moving into a community to study it), I am already here (Taylor, 2001). As a community resident however, researcher positions with regard to ethnicity, class, gender, and age could transcend in some ways but not in others, but again an interpretivist approach could absorb this, and I always considered my position as resident researcher as a privileged one, although it presented problems (Gunaratnum, 2003). My relationship with the field, therefore, became intertwined with being a resident, where driving up Romantown Road became either a short cut to Denton city centre, or an exercise in observation to determine the extent to which new communities were being mirrored through the emergence of new businesses. Sarah Pink reflected on this ambiguity of positionality where she observed: ‘a conversation with a friend may retrospectively become an interview and a fieldwork ‘event’ may simultaneously be seen as an activity that is intermingled with other aspects of life and distinguishable only when drawn out of this web of interconnected narratives’ (Pink, 2000, p99). Being an insider has certainly

helped me gain access to respondents through neighbour and family contacts and through colleagues at the local university. However, chatting with my son-in-law also becomes a research exercise, where his insider knowledge of the Pakistani community is shared and which ultimately enlightens my understandings of local situations within Romantown. As such, he becomes a key informant within my research project, although not regarded as such through interview or focus group. My daughter also falls within this category. As a non Pakistani Muslim convert married into that community, she has also been able to provide a singular view of the Pakistani community in Romantown and her position within it. What Pink observed was the nature of the relationship between respondents she knew in Spain and how she viewed the changed relationship when she returned to England, although she found the change unproblematic (Pink, 2000). Insider knowledge that is given to me freely did provide dilemmas. At a time, in policy terms, when government seeks to encourage Pakistani communities to move away from living parallel existences (BBC News, Ruth Kelly Speech, 2006, Cattle, 2005), my familial access would seem to be a privileged one. However, much deliberation on my part took place on the nature and amount of this informal and personal life data that could be incorporated into my thesis. My son-in-law is always a ready source of information for me. However, where Pink had found this duality between respondent and friendship unproblematic, my decisions to include trains of thought which may present my daughter's family in a disadvantageous light, created ambivalence between the need to pursue insight and feelings of disloyalty to my new family (Pink, 2000). With local friendships (as with Pink), the relationship was different. Some of my immediate neighbours refused to join the residents' focus group and this could have made my relationship with them awkward and embarrassing. However these fears were unfounded and my relationship with friends and neighbours remains unchanged. Other neighbours who did attend the focus group, felt unhampered through knowing me personally and responses from them were seemingly frank

and honest. There could also be perceived disadvantages in constantly meeting agency representatives who were participants in my project. However, I continue to meet with the Chair of the Refugee Forum, the NHS nurse, and the Asylum Seeker Support Officer at Refugee Forum and other meetings on asylum and community issues, and my continued presence as a researcher in the community seems to be appreciated. There could have been problems with the accuracy of data as people may not have wanted to divulge information to me because they knew me. However, as an insider I feel that these are shared concerns with a colleague and neighbour rather than data divulged to an outsider. The multi-method approach helped to ensure accuracies in response where respondents were known to me and commonalities across data would have overcome the dangers of purposefully skewed responses (triangulation is discussed further under *methods of analysis* later in the chapter).

In my own case, as resident/researcher, I remain resident. Romantown and relationships I have formed prior and during the duration of this project remain with me spatially and emotionally and respondents (family and friends) know where I live. Thus it becomes impossible to separate myself from my research where respondents are family and friends, and neighbours become friends, and where Kurdish asylum seekers recycle the rubbish outside my own and my neighbours' doors.

I also have a sense of pride in my own community and enjoy living here. I entered the field with fairly romanticised views of how well my own community dealt with multicultural, diversity and dispersal. Freeing myself of these preconceptions therefore has been quite difficult. Caroline Knowles observed the difficulties of removing herself from the field when the field was all around her (Knowles, 2000). Unlike Knowles my university is not the local university and this has helped me to retain a sense of distance that she did not have. My own

university is 80 miles away so there is little danger of people discovering me there, but like Knowles, I would have felt a sense of violation of work space although most of my work takes place within my own home which is situated in the field.

Even as a local resident however, although having previously conducted a survey on local attitudes to asylum seekers, I had previously had no dealings personally with asylum populations in Romantown, and therefore was unsure whether my probing questions would be welcome (Gunaratnum, 2003). Many of the clients dealt with in the Refugee Advice Centre had obviously suffered severe trauma, and it was easy to forget how fragile some of these clients were when I was faced with an endless queue of people wanting help. Emma Stewart (2005), when researching the vulnerability of asylum seekers in the UK, wrote on their everyday exclusion and quoted findings from a research project carried out by Valentine and McDonald: 'that asylum seekers were most likely to experience open and blatant prejudice. This prejudice was expressed in terms of perceived economic threat and accusations of preferential treatment of asylum seekers' (ibid, p500, Valentine and McDonald, 2004). The latter remark became contextualised in Romantown where the local newspaper exposed complaints from residents after a surgery was allocated to asylum populations and closed to themselves (discussed further in Chapter Five) (*Denton Evening Telegraph*, 1 September, 2004, 24 February, 2003). Stewart continued: 'as a result (of accusations like these), it was generally considered socially acceptable to express prejudice against this group' (Stewart, 2005, p500, Valentine and McDonald, 2004). Stewart also found through her investigations, feelings of suspended identity, and most asylum seekers she spoke with only felt they could have a normal life after a positive decision was made by the Home Office (Stewart, 2005). These feelings therefore needed to be understood.

Trust was also an important consideration when interviewing asylum seekers. As a volunteer within the Refugee Advice Centre, I was generally considered to be trustworthy by clients and was also informed by volunteers that many clients preferred to speak with UK/white/volunteers about their private business rather than through interpreters and caseworkers from their own community centres who they felt may discuss their business outside the centre.

Interviewing minority ethnic residents about asylum issues could also have been a daunting prospect. Romantown's ethnic minorities frequently came under scrutiny from local academics, so my interest in their opinions about the asylum issue could have seemed repetitive and intrusive. Also my whiteness, class and professional status could have been an issue. However, many of their sons and daughters attend courses at the local university and any minority ethnic resident I spoke with was always polite and helpful and notably interested that I actually lived in the community and had worked at the university. Therefore, my position as resident seemed to transcend other barriers of difference that could have occurred.

As far as contact with agencies was concerned, however, being a local researcher initially had not helped in accessing the police. As stated earlier, they refused outright to be interviewed; only furnishing me with edited policy documents on asylum seeker dispersal to the region. As noted previously, this was overcome through contact at the Refugee Forum meetings, so reasonable access was achieved in this way and minutes on police issues have been used as data for this project. Statutory agencies are now required to access hard to reach groups through the government's local cohesion agenda which by default will guarantee their regular attendance at Refugee Forum meetings. So as long as I take the minutes, I will retain access.

Ethical considerations

Because of the nature of this study, there were also ethical issues to consider which will be discussed briefly here.

The now mandatory requirement by research councils for funded PhDs is that any research with vulnerable groups should be overseen by university ethics committees. Therefore this project was submitted for consideration. Assurances were provided on informed consents; the safety of venues; any potential for conflict was identified prior to meetings; and that codes of ethics (British Sociological Association) had been adhered to. Issues regarding over involvement which ultimately had presented problems, were also approached at this stage, and assurances on attendance at training courses in preparation for the field were given. I was also asked to write a vigorous reflexive diary which I did (the implications of which I have discussed further here under *researcher role*).

With all respondents (interview and focus group), a strategy of informed consent was adopted with the aim and methods of the research being made clear to all participants (translated to non English speakers), and the confidentiality and anonymity of individual respondents was assured (see Appendices One, Three, Four and Seven). Anonymity was vital for respondents taking part who were failed asylum seekers and also where community tensions were discussed by community residents. Both interviews and focus groups had provided respondents with opportunities to discuss issues of community and asylum within a monitored environment. Respondents were not coerced in any way to respond by a third party, and their right of refusal to respond was emphasized. Finally resultant data was stored on my home computer where pseudonyms had been used to ensure anonymity (in the case of the asylum

focus group, no names were used at all). Transcriptions of interviews and focus groups were offered to respondents if they wanted them.

Ethical considerations surrounding the use of data were ever present and decisions were continually made about what data to incorporate where family links, the use of vulnerable groups as respondents, and insider knowledge to facilitate access were factors. Any data had to be rigorously filtered for future consequence to asylum seekers whose statuses were ambiguous; my own relationships with family and friends; and my own position within Romantown. Constant recognition of the vulnerability of the groups that constituted my main source of data was also taken into account; and generally finding the right way through that provided insight on the one hand but was ethically sound on the other. Another ethical consideration was my position as minute taker at Refugee Forum meetings which continues to provide rich data and access to a cross section of agencies, such as the police who initially did not want to be interviewed by me. (See previous discussion in this chapter on the use of Refugee Forum minutes as part of the observation process and how this was resolved).

These sections bring to an end the discussions on the research approach and methodology used in this project. What is to be discussed in this final section is the use of grounded theory as a process of analysis, and how data through this process, becomes contextualised within Chapters Five and Six.

Methods of analysis

It was decided to use grounded theory as a basis for analysis as its self generating process aligns well with the research approach taken in this study. However, as already discussed, it is acceptable to find a starting point where, as Hammersley observed earlier: ‘considerable progress can sometimes be made in clarifying and developing research problems before fieldwork begins’ (Hammersley 1995, p25). With this in mind, semi structured interviews and focus group schedules mimicking these original ideas, guided the respondents within certain areas of investigation, and it was this that anchored the analysis initially.

In grounded theory tradition, analysis continued during the collection, transcription and preparation of data and the whole became an iterative process for emerging ideas to present themselves and integrate and ground themselves into the data (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995, Strauss and Corbin, 1990, Strauss 1987, Glaser, 1978, Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The codes developed initially through research ideas were presented to interview and focus group respondents in the form of open ended questions. These formed around five key ideas (approached theoretically in Chapter Two and through policy literature in Chapter Three) as follows:

- Boundary Formations (Fredrik Barth) where questions sought to determine the extent of boundary fixidity (contact) of resident groups (inter relationships) and the extent of relationships with asylum seekers
- Local perceptions of difference (Stuart Hall) aimed firstly at asylum seekers, then perceptions of Romantown by residents and asylum seekers (community). Difference here could be problematic or not, as the case maybe, and concerns could be particular or general to Romantown

- The desire to self manage (policy implications on segregation). How much local residents, asylum seekers and local agencies preferred to manage local situations, how well they worked together or not (Barth on boundaries, Hall on difference, and Foucault and Wright on governance)
- The myth of the ghetto was perceptions of difference again, where the binary black/white for example (Hall) would be regarded differently from within and outside the community
- The perceptions on settlement and safety of asylum seekers

Open coding of transcriptions then followed, which involved word by word tracking where points of interest or codes were flagged up within the above areas of interest and preliminary codes were formed in this way. Memos were then attached to these codes and examined and the process continued until ideas from the data within these codes became saturated. New grids were formed and the new ideas were added, bringing in new headings. The grid however, eventually became unwieldy, so from these initial codings, new more robust codes were formed and then applied across initial coding categories, and quotations used from transcripts to anchor ideas. These reworked codes were then used as a core for the daily diary sheets from the participant observation and for minutes of Refugee Forum meetings, the latter where data is still ongoing and which Glaser and Strauss continue to accept as part of the grounded theory process (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

Emerging codes such as *porosity of boundaries* were broken down into the two codes which were *fixed boundaries* and *fluid or leaky boundaries* and the data was reorganised under these two codes. Alliances were collapsed into *co-operating communities* (historical links and community alliances) and local perceptions of difference (if tension bearing) became

competing communities which included religious/racialised/socio economic tensions, critical events tensions (Bale Street Surgery), and tensions over cultural behaviours and practices (from Kurdish asylum seekers). Agency connectivity then became divided between tensions and co-operation and the local refugee advice centre as a category evolved into *fire fighting the asylum crisis* which predominated in the latter half of Chapter Six. Senses of Englishness and *Britishness* were included which more specifically became *senses of national belonging and inclusion locally in Romantown*. Local belonging and attachment was rethought as *valuing multicultural* which evolved into *multicultural hospitality* and so it continued.

Initially therefore, coding categories used to begin Chapters Five and Six emerged as: Fixed boundaries; Fluid boundaries; Co-operating communities; Competing communities; Religious tensions; Socio-economic tensions; Critical events tensions; Racialised tensions; Stereotypes and local rumour; Agencies work across/disrupt ethnic boundaries; Agencies reproduce ethnic boundaries; Inter agency tensions; Intra agency tensions; Senses of national inclusion, Englishness; Senses of local inclusion and attachment; Multicultural hospitality; Multicultural hostility and anti asylum sentiment.

The reduction of these codes further in Chapter Five became a main heading *communities within a community, partial integrations and hospitalities* with sub sections on *new immigration and community; a common sense of community towards new asylum groups; and asylum seekers experiences of community in Romantown*. The chapter then hinged on critical events, local media reportage and external effects with a main heading *flashpoints and media: the impact of external factors on Romantown* with sub sections *the national media on local issues* and *local policy mistakes*. The final section, which concentrated on disparate aspects of community, increased segregation and change, and hostilities and isolation of new groups, had

a main heading *disparate communities: multicultural, partial segregation and social change*, with sub sections on *mobility and the process of resident change in Romantown; asylum communities: hostilities and isolation; global complexity, religious essentialism, ambiguity and difference..*

Chapter Six initially focused on bonding and co-operation between agencies in Romantown (which echo the tone in the first section of Chapter Five) with a main heading *bonding and co-operation between agencies: reflections on competency and compliance*, which includes sub sections on *local government management and control: the statutory sector reaches into the community; faith community engagement; committed local university and multi-faith centre; the role of the RCO and its level of participation in Romantown*. The second half of the chapter, as with Chapter Five, provides the more disparate insights on agency engagement and asylum generally from within the Refugee Advice Centre where the main heading is *a change of view: narratives from within a refugee advice centre*, which includes sub-sections on *Kurdish and other networks in action and the Refugee Advice Centre versus the Home Office and other agencies*. This section uses mainly vignettes from my observation notes.

Although grounded theory provided a rigorous analysis tool for managing large amounts of data and an inbuilt process of iterative analysis to produce findings, the use of three types of method within my research design ultimately enabled me to triangulate by checking across data for commonalities in order to validate results (Thomas, A, 1998). Thomas advocates particular rigour with case study methodology where he said: ‘it is easy to be criticised for simply finding evidence to fit your preconceived ideas...since you choose the case to study and start with a theoretical explanation already in mind, then finding evidence to fit your pre-prepared story may appear to be a self-fulfilling prophecy’ (ibid, p329). Thomas suggested

ways of circumventing these problems by using different methods of investigation to question and observe various agencies and individuals in order to get evidence on the same point from different points of view. This fits well with Glaser and Strauss' formation of core categories initially that can then be applied across to other forms of methods collection (like observational diary entries and minutes from meetings, for example, as with my study) (Thomas, 1998, Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Within the grounded theory tradition, the robustness of the core categories produced should be able to withstand competing ideas that emerge from these cross methods analyses and which have worked successfully in this case.

I decided not to use *N6* qualitative software for analysis as I found it time consuming to set up and I felt it too mechanical for this type of study. Although, as noted, the analysis grid became very unwieldy, I was able to progress through rigorous analysis, to more robust codes that could be used across both Chapters Five and Six.

Conclusion

The basic requirement for this project is to capture the reality of the phenomenon which is the nature of the response that is afforded to asylum seekers within this multicultural community of Romantown. I feel that I have achieved this through the use of an ethnographic approach, where the overall aim is to replicate this human experience in a naturalistic way and through a grounded analysis of the data.

The research design also adheres to the multi-method ethnographic approach and fulfils the qualitative interpretivist criteria of allowing for the reflexivity of respondents and researcher to

be built into the enquiry. Although findings will be affected by researcher bias, I too was rigorously reflexive throughout the project and aware that my position as resident and researcher within this community often created problems of over involvement for me, although enabled me to achieve great insight at the same time. My residential status has also provided me with insider knowledge that allows for a continued reappraisal of the phenomenon of dispersal to Romantown. The use of three methods reinforced rigour in that results were triangulated and commonalities from data validated results.

I have problematised researching asylum issues and ethnicity generally, thus the positionality of the researcher is explored through reflexive evaluation. Through submitting my project for ethical appraisal, I also feel confident that I adhered to research council requirements and had proceeded in an ethical manner.

Although there were large amounts of data produced, analysis through grounded theory techniques, enabled a rigorous, disciplined trawl through transcriptions of interview and focus group data. Resultant codes were then applied to the observer diary and minutes which in turn produced new codes. Resultant codes were flexible enough to incorporate any new ideas that emerged.

As a researcher, I feel extremely privileged to live in Romantown and observe how the community deals with itself as well as new communities moving in. The methodological narrative produced here has enabled a thorough, reflexive approach to the study of dispersal which has produced intuitive rich data as a result. My own position, as resident and researcher, has added a unique insight into the study of asylum dispersal here. It is from this point

therefore, that I enter the empirical chapters of this thesis, beginning with Chapter Five, which deals with local senses of community, and resident and asylum seeker responses to dispersal.

ROMANTOWN

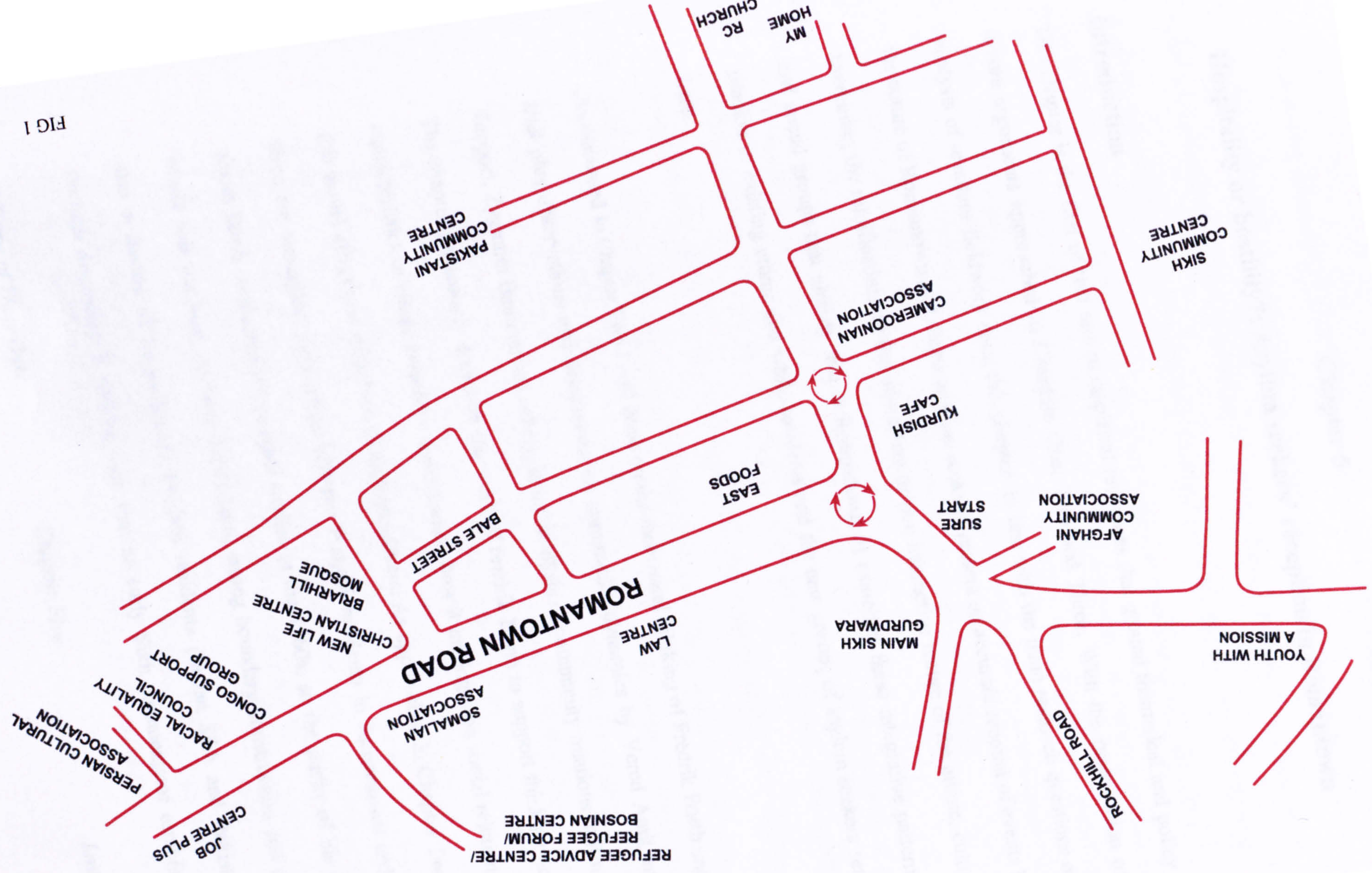


FIG 1

Chapter 5

Hospitality or hostility?: Asylum seekers' reception in Romantown

Introduction

This chapter is the first of two sets of empirical responses that ground theoretical and policy driven arguments approached in Chapters One, Two and Three. With the presentation of analysis of resultant fieldwork data, this chapter, in line with the main research questions on the nature of Romantown as a dispersal area, seeks to present an accurate account of events by examining the ramifications of the interactive or non interactive nature of the ethnic, cultural and social groups that already live in Romantown. It examines these integrative patterns in relation to existing ethnic and white residents and the new groups of asylum seekers settling here.

As discussed in Chapter Two I will draw on the theoretical thinking of Fredrik Barth and Stuart Hall plus observations and discussions on community dynamics by Vered Amit and Nigel Rapport, Zygmunt Bauman and others, in my analysis of community relations in Romantown. The chapter particularly draws on the work of Fredrik Barth to support thinking on the local characteristics of ethnic boundary maintenance, how it impinges on social relations, and how this would affect new dispersals of asylum seekers. As approached in Chapter Two, primarily there are ecological similarities between Punjabi residents in Romantown and Pathans on whom Barth conducted his seminal studies in the 1960s, so the purity of his investigations would bear out here. As with the Pathans, strong boundary construction and maintenance is also a feature of Romantown's Punjabi residents (Indian Sikh and Pakistani). Although through discussion it will be seen that an early Sikh commentator establishes differences

between these two predominant groups in Romantown, empirical responses show a level of maintained contact which, in Barthian terms, re-establishes the cultural boundary but also engenders continued good social relations. However, Barth observed that elements of insecurity can have the effect of reinforcing cultural boundaries and also constraining inter-ethnic contact, not only between immigrant groups and host populations, but also with other immigrant groups. As will become apparent in my discussions in the chapter, at times of tension within Romantown, these two groups and others have come together and supported each other, but there was always a danger that a certain amount of continued contact was imagined, so there was a level of uncertainty surrounding *actual* social contact.

In discussion, Barth's observations were also used to examine the social relations of other residents who did not belong to these two large community groups. The respondents interviewed had settled/remained in Romantown and managed to find their own sense of community which they were not able to find elsewhere. These residents, in Barthian terms, had no Pathan connection or cultural links to the Punjabis but responses showed that they were also able to keep a measure of connection with other residents yet retained a measure of distance as well. Asylum groups similarly had no cultural links with Punjabi or other residents (although Kurds had religious connections with Pakistanis), but links were observed where a Sikh respondent felt that her parents as immigrants had shared experiences of stigma that she felt asylum seekers also suffered from the wider community. In Barthian terms, this sharing of stigma made backstage negotiations possible, connections could continue and initial tensions were managed via faith/asylum leader and agency intervention.

The final section shows community dynamics changing where the Sikh communities were moving away and it was the less expansive and more stigmatised Pakistani community that

was to present the welcome to incoming asylum seekers. Strong boundary construction, the practice of endogamy and a reticence to integrate resulted in more clouded workings of this community with the equally inaccessible Kurdish asylum seekers who remained distant and unwilling to form into a visible RCO. Thus in Barthian terms, continued connection and backstage dialogue between these residents and asylum seekers was unclear and more regulated contact would rely on agency intervention to maintain it, which is the focus for discussion in Chapter Six.

Global migration to Romantown is not new and has affected the area directly for many years. For the purposes of this thesis as a local case study, there is a requirement to establish the precise nature of immigrant settlement here. Therefore, in section one of the chapter, there is a short examination of older immigration settlement as well as an account of the recent patterns of asylum settlement.

Section two will focus on the relationship between multicultural, senses of community and research participants' experiences of expressions of support, hospitality and mutuality afforded to each other and asylum seekers. Fieldwork data will substantiate Barthian thinking on the establishment, porosity and retention of cultural, social and religious boundaries that determine the level of exchange between groups to maintain the cultural status quo (see Chapter Two). The aim here is to ascertain where existing alliances lie and examine how new alliances are formed and maintained with others, and how fears over the presence of the stranger are overcome (Bauman, 1990). Drawing on the work in Chapter Two, the concept of community is discussed as it commonly emerged within the interviews and focus groups to describe Romantown and its residents.

Moving on from the more supportive aspects of asylum integration, section three provides a hinge to the final substantive section, and focuses on how external policy decisions created particular incidents and critical events immediately prior to and during the fieldwork period. This brought Romantown to the attention of not only the local but also the national media where the onus was on localised impacts of dispersal *particularly* to minority ethnic residents. A certain amount of criticism is also levelled here at the media, nationally and locally, to responsibly report on dispersal.

From an examination of the support, hospitality and mutuality afforded between residents themselves and asylum seekers examined in section two, section four develops an ambivalence and tension through examining issues of fragmentation of community and isolation of asylum groups. This section particularly problematises assumptions on the suitability of Romantown's ethnically diverse nature for dispersal and possibilities for community tensions become more apparent. As stated above, initially the section will revisit demographics to establish how allegiances between faith communities have weakened, where groups have begun to move away from Romantown and the more segregated elements remain. The main focus will then proceed with fieldwork examples in which racialisation takes a number of unexpected turns. The section thus examines ways in which the multicultural composition of Romantown has led to new complexities and tensions.

Asylum and refugee settlement in Romantown: recent patterns and data

Resident demographics of Romantown

The existing dynamics of Romantown are as a result of a continuing social and ethnic change as immigrant populations have moved in and out. Originally African Caribbean and Asian immigrants (mainly Punjabi Hindus and Sikhs from India, and Pakistani Muslims (predominantly Mir Puris) began arriving in Romantown from the 1950s onwards (Bains, 1980, 1968). Religious, national and ethnic descriptions will be applied to respondents from India and Pakistan, which are used in the public sphere locally to determine difference, although privately Asian residents may refer to themselves as Punjabis, Mir Puri or other more localised classifications. African Caribbean respondents will be referred to as such and their religion will not be referred to as a marker of difference where they are predominantly Christian.

There is a dearth of statistical information on ethnic minorities prior to 1981 in the county of Denton. Census data at 1981 put numbers of African Caribbean in the county at 2,516 (78% in the city of Denton), Indian 5,438 (84% located in the city), Pakistani 2,476 (93% located in the city). Determination of religious difference at the 2001 Census showed (percentages rounded up) Indian Hindu populations moving away from Romantown where they now only represent 1.95% of the local population of 13,500; Indian Sikhs were also moving away to other parts of the city but have maintained a larger presence in Romantown at 14% of the local population; African Caribbean populations have also moved to other parts of the city and their presence in Romantown is much reduced at 4.73% of the local population; also Pakistani Muslim residents have maintained a strong presence and now number 20% of the local population (ONS, 2006, Weller and Wolfe, 2003). Fragmentation of ethnic groups and its effects will be discussed further in the final section of this chapter.

To date, it is mainly settlements of Sikhs and Pakistani Muslims that have remained in Romantown. An adjacent ward to Romantown has a 34% population of Pakistanis although a much lower percentage of Sikhs at 4%, and asylum seekers have *only* been dispersed to Romantown (ONS, 2006, 2004, Weller and Wolfe, 2003). It is these two wards that form the multicultural tranche south of the city. Other smaller numbers of immigrants arrived and settled from Uganda and Vietnam in the 1970/80s and since 1997, refugee communities from Kosovo, Bosnia and Albania were also settled and asylum seekers from 2001-2003, plus small numbers of asylum seekers in 2006. There is also a white British population of 48% in Romantown, although as Hawkins and Fox writing locally on Romantown observed, it is regarded as: 'a neighbourhood largely made up of ethnic minorities' (Hawkins and Fox, 2004, p13).

Dispersal site and arrival of asylum seekers

Between 2001 and 2003, asylum communities from Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Somalia, Sudan, Eritrea, Cameroon, Congo (Zaire) and Zimbabwe were dispersed to Romantown. In 2003, local council statistics put total numbers at 1070 (Denton City Council (DCC), 2003). Most recently, workforces from the new EU accession countries of Poland, Ukraine and Albania have begun arriving and workforces from Bulgaria and Romania are expected in 2007 (now arrived) (Denton Refugee Forum, July 2007).

At the cessation of asylum seeker dispersal to the city in 2003, local asylum statistics stated numbers of Iraqi Kurds (largest nationality) to be 600 (city council/local police), and NASS housed at 375 (ONS, 2006). However the local Refugee Advice Centre (where my observation took place) estimated more accurate figures which encompassed large numbers of failed and

destitute Iraqi Kurds at 2-3000 (Denton Refugee Advice Centre (DRAC), 2005). Other figures gathered from refugee community organisations by Sheila Fox in her report for Refugee Action and Refugee Housing, concurred with the Kurdish (from Iraq) figures of 2000-3000 supplied by the Refugee Advice Centre, and put others at Congolese 200-250, Somali 300-600, Iranian 250-400, Cameroonian 60, Afghani 600-750, Zimbabwean 50-60, Sudanese 30-40, Kosovo/Albanian 400-500 and Bosnian at 300 (Fox, 2006).

Most recent figures produced by EMCARS (East Midland Consortium for Asylum Seekers and Refugees Support) Contract Management Report put figures at 543 asylum seekers of all nationalities (accommodated Section 95 and Section 4) in the city (EMCARS, 2007, Denton Refugee Forum, March, 2007). EMCARS' figures are based purely on accommodation provided for clients and would therefore not take into account any destitute numbers. Local research on the homeless, funded by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, also showed no incidences of asylum seekers requesting accommodation in local hostels, so destitute numbers remain hidden within the community (Jeffels, Richards and Hill, 2005). It needs to be noted here that EMCARS' dispersal statistics (based on cluster limit numbers of 1:200 asylum seekers dispersed per head of population) would cover the whole of the city where Romantown is situated. Actually, asylum seekers are housed within the Romantown postcode within the city and are thus concentrated in this way. With residents numbering 13,494 in Romantown, an approximate figure of 2,500 Kurdish and other asylum groups approaches the 5,138 static resident groups of Asian populations and the 7,022 white populations (ONS, 2001). Using Romantown Road as an indicator of multicultural settlement (see Chapter Four), increasing numbers of Kurdish businesses opening in the centre of this community would also seem to suggest a strengthening of this particular group, although most recent figures from the Refugee Advice Centre have suggested a fall in Kurdish numbers, which could be due to lack

of need for its services or population drift to other cities. There are also approximately 3000 EU Polish workers now in Denton although again there are no accurate figures (Wojcik, 2007).

There is definitely uncertainty as to exact numbers of asylum seekers in Romantown. What is certain, however, is Romantown's established but changing multicultural nature through which I now examine the different formations of local multicultural social relations.

Communities within a community? Partial integrations and hospitality

Fieldwork data from respondents speaking about Romantown, initially present a strong sense of memory, solidarity and nostalgia that has formed its community base (although elements of this will be undermined in the final section). Robinson and Reeve's report for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation entitled *Neighbourhood Experiences on New Immigration* (2006), observed that established ethnically diverse communities can provide a richness of resources that aid accessing key services, and provide facilities for coping with hostility and discrimination (Robinson and Reeve, 2006). (Agency support will be discussed in the next chapter). Their report also pointed to gaps in the evidence base within dispersal communities, like Romantown, and stated that there remains: 'a dearth of explicit evidence regarding the experiences and consequences of new immigration at the neighbourhood level', which my project seeks to address (Robinson and Reeve, 2006, p41). Their report also concurs with recommendations by the Audit Commission regarding ethnic composition, community relations and asylum networks already in existence in dispersal areas (Robinson et al, 2003,

Audit Commission 2000c). The extent of agency provision in Romantown and Refugee Community Organisation (RCO) representation is discussed in Chapter Six.

There are certainly aspects of existing networks and a local discourse of community in Romantown, especially where community relations have been built on historical, ethnic and geographical links. Large numbers of Indian Sikhs and Pakistani Muslim community residents shared geographical home locations across the Indian and Pakistani borders (Bains, 1980, 1968). Alliances developed over time between these communities where both had executive memberships on the local racial equality council (1988-89), and collaborations took place with other groups during National Front incursions of the 1980s (as described later by focus group residents). It was clear, however, that although there was collaboration between these earlier immigrant settlers, cultural boundaries remained strongly marked. In terms of ethnic boundary maintenance and social cohesion generally, this is an interesting community dynamic of Romantown and discussed here. H W Bains, an Indian Sikh, who was an executive member of the local Council for Racial Equality during the 1960s and 1980s, wrote accounts of early Pakistani, Indian Hindu and Indian Sikh settlement in Romantown, and his observations will be used throughout this chapter. Initially Bains did make some distinctions between these early Sikh and Pakistani settlers where Sikhs generally tended to integrate more into Britain from the outset by bringing families over and through playing leading roles in organising community services; where the Pakistani remained single with the intention of returning to Pakistan (1980, 1968). Bains also made distinctions between the more educated Sikh as opposed to the relatively uneducated Pakistani, and suggested that Sikhs did not mix with the Pakistani or West Indian immigrants, although he said that they worked with each other. On the Indian immigrants he observed: ‘these migrants (Indians) settled and worked alongside the peasants (Pakistanis), again distinguishing the Sikh from the Pakistani and the West Indian

settlements, among whom there has been very little mixing of the educated elite with the peasantry' (Bains, 1980, 1968, p33). The term 'peasant' here used by Bains, need not be as derogatory as it sounds where the peasant Pakistani in his truest sense would have been a land worker, and divisions between these two groups would have been traditionally classed in this way. The level of contact at work and close proximity within the community of Romantown itself also ensured that these groups maintained a continued level of connection. Historically too these two groups were by no means strangers to each other in that they shared geographical home locations and both spoke Punjabi. Barth observed: 'It is clear that boundaries persist despite a flow of personnel across them. In other words, categorical ethnic distinctions do not depend on an absence of mobility, contact and information but do entail social processes of exclusion and incorporation whereby discrete categories are maintained despite changing participation and membership in the course of individual life histories' (Barth, 1969, p1). Through limited contact with each other, the cultural definitions of these two groups were continually being reinforced and did not diminish through their removal from the Punjab/Pakistan to Romantown. Barth observed this trait through his seminal studies on Pathans who have ecological similarities with Punjabis, thus making his observations on their actions highly relevant here. Other reasons for persistent boundary markers between these two groups could be remnants of the caste or a class system where Bains distinguishes Sikhs as the educated elite, although both Sikh and Pakistani residents in Romantown verbally perceive the caste system as racist; or that there persisted an overt conformity to the cultural boundary because of perceived outside threat which is discussed more fully in the next paragraph. As far as involvement in public life was concerned, Bains again promoted Sikh rather than Pakistani involvement and observes: 'This is perhaps one reason why the Sikhs in Britain have thrown up so many leaders, and have been able to organise community services on a much larger scale than the *mutual* (as quoted) and to village kin which has characterised the Pakistanis'

(Bains, 1980, 1968, p33). The clannish nature of Pakistanis in Manchester is observed by Werbner in Chapter Two and the endogamous lifestyle of Romantown Pakistanis is discussed in the final section of this chapter and in Chapter Six (Werbner, 1990). Certainly Mr Singh, my Sikh respondent, had been involved in local politics for many years and his community's involvement in local governance is discussed in the next chapter.

Although Bains observed that early Sikh, Pakistani and West Indian settlements did not mix particularly with each other initially, although they had established regular contact via work and in the community, Nasir, the young Pakistani businessman interviewed, recalled past and more recent collaborations and a sense of solidarity during early settlement and in the face of local hostility. These observed collaborations reinforced Barthian thinking on the continued level of connectivity (ebb and flow) and good relationships retained between these earlier immigrants. For Barth it was this continued ebb and flow of contactual relations that becomes the release mechanism between these groups in that he views these stable but persisting social relations as vitally important (Jenkins, 2003, Barth, 1969). In Chapter Two, I have used Barth again to observe an overt conformity within the cultural/ethnic boundary that accounts for the *persisting* rather than reduced cultural differences over time between the Sikh and Pakistani communities (Barth, 1969). Barth observed: 'in most political regimes.... where there is less security and people live under a greater threat of arbitrariness and violence outside their primary community, the insecurity itself acts as a constraint on inter-ethnic contacts.....what is more there are also internal sanctions in such communities which tend to enhance overt conformity within and cultural differences between communities' (Barth, 1969, p21). There are dangers here that this constraint could promote situations of: 'the mosaic of little worlds that touch but do not interpenetrate' (cited by Park), and the removal away from 'actual social relations to the symbolically demarcated categories of identity', which in Barthian terms

would be far from ideal (Amit and Rapport, 2002, p42, p45, Anderson, 1991/1983, Park, 1925 as cited in Bannerz, 1980, p26). Barth's concern would be that a lack of *actual* contact would result in vitally important social relationships not being maintained (implications of this discussed further later in this section and the final section of this chapter).

The arbitrariness and tension towards ethnic residents from outside Romantown in the 1980s however, seemed not to isolate, and had the effect of creating physical alliances between the Sikh and Pakistani communities and also with other ethnic community groups such as the African Caribbean, and in some cases, the white residents as well. So, when the community as a whole was threatened, groups collaborated, and this sense of community was promoted by all respondents spoken to. Nasir, referred back to earlier strong alliances between resident Asian and African Caribbean communities:

In them days, the Sikh community got on fine with the Pakistani community the reason being that they have come over to this country, they are very new and they need to stick together.....India and Pakistan is one country actually...Same with the Jamaicans, they stuck with us, this being if there is a racism issue (Fieldwork interview, 27 February, 2005)

He also recalled more recent collaborations when community leaders joined to prevent inappropriate businesses being opened on Romantown Road:

I remember recently somebody wanted to open an adult bookshop on Romantown Road and there were a lot of petitions going around... ..somebody wanted to open a lap dancing thing on Romantown Road, the community were very active in stopping that (Fieldwork interview, 27 February, 2005)

And he recalled joint Sikh and Pakistani refusals to rent houses to NASS (discussed more fully in the final section).

As observed, a sense of community was also spoken of which transcended divisions and in which friendship and support came from *all* residents in Romantown. Jill a white resident from the residents' focus group recalled:

I have lived in Romantown for 28 years and when the riots were on in 1981 and at our end of Rockhill Road where there are all different races and cultures and most of the people have lived there a long time, so everybody had got young children at that point and all the men got together and defended each end of the street with dustbin lids and you know, and the attitude was if you want to riot you do it, we will all stick together you know, Sikhs, Muslims everybody, you are not coming down here and disturbing our way of life and that was what everybody did so it had to work pretty well for them all to stand together. And if there were people coming in at the front and people coming over the back, there were lots of systems where each would let the other know what was going on. It was not diluting any community at all. Everybody had still got their own, it was actually organised by the leader of the (Sikh) gurdwara (Resident Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

Mr Singh, a local Sikh community leader, also continued to substantiate this sense of community across all residents and spoke of a general regard that existed within Romantown and stressed an integrated coming together to celebrate:

A lot of respect, a lot of respect in this community. And we have proved this one. Over the past years, how many times have we had joint functions. Is there any other area where they have a joint function? They will have their individual functions you know, so we have our joint functions. We have got a lot of interlink you know....We respect, we respect, we try to be, what we say, we try to get together on the one hand, and on the other hand we try to preserve our culture as well. That is a good thing (Fieldwork interview, 24 February, 2005)

It is this shared similarity and maintenance of difference that Amit and Rapport (2002) refer to when discussing community and ethnicity as a coming together where the mutual (collective) and oppositional (ethnic demarcation) nature of community both act together. There may also be elements of imagined community here, already approached, where groups physically come together during troubled times, but where Bains' observations on communion were not as communal as those memories of collaboration and support observed by Nasir, Jill and Mr Singh. Again, to reiterate from a Barthian perspective, the persistence of these social relationships across ethnic boundaries is vitally important to boundary maintenance where he said they are: 'often the very foundations on which embracing social systems are built', and any ambiguity with regard to contact would be of concern (Barth, 1969, p2). Firm boundary markers as observed, are characteristic of immigrant settlement in Romantown, but if *actual* physical connection between groups breaks down, (as noted) vitally important community relations would not be maintained.

To lessen the potential for fracture in community relations however, connections can be maintained by elders of ethnic communities in Romantown who tend to speak for their communities via established faith community associations. Certainly this form of collective dialogue was observed by Bains where he promoted Sikh rather than Pakistani leadership in

the organisation of community services locally, and Mr Singh is certainly a testimony to his own community's stance on multicultural community living:

We have a social centre. We have also when we have any functions you know. The gurdwara or the Sikh temple itself, it is open for all human beings whether you are Muslim, Christian, whoever you are, everybody, that is what I would like to stress. You might see the different names on the front, some based on the caste system, some other foundation, but the main thing, where there is a Sri-Guru Granth Sahib. That is the holy book of Sikhs, that temple is good for everybody (Fieldwork interview, 24 February, 2005)

I think the community of Romantown is working very well. Though there are problems no doubt, but obviously we had the opportunity to have public meetings, we had the opportunity to have a public gathering again you know, we held that in Woodland Square, Romantown Park you know, over the years, and we do have our procession you know especially Vaisakhi that takes place every year in April. So the gathering shows us you know and the participation we have from the local community here is wonderful you know. And those of different opinions you know which of course we can't ignore the facts you know, but everybody seems to be living together in nicely in peacefully, and everybody wishes to have a peaceful life. That's the way I look at it anyway (Fieldwork interview, 24 February, 2005)

It is apparent that from theoretical and empirical input within this subsection, these two large immigrant groups appear to have a common understanding of what good community living is, as do other residents (white and African Caribbean). However, it is how this localised sense of community extends to new asylum groups arriving in Romantown, who do not share historical and geographical links or histories of past collaborations, which is crucial to this thesis. Before investigating this however, it may be useful to provide a further dimension to

community thinking in Romantown through the incorporation of the views of other residents into the discussion before discussing asylum settlement.

New immigration, existing residents and community

Other resident research participants to Romantown also expressed feeling a sense of local belonging and community, although this tended to be differently described. For example, for Aiyesha, a white female Muslim convert living in Romantown, community for her was being able to practice her religion freely and openly. Aiyesha had left France with her French Muslim convert husband Abdullah because of secular policies and the restrictions of dress there and had come to live in Romantown. She had lived in the city of Denton as a child and always thought Romantown an awful place until returning to the UK as a Muslim. She explained now feeling completely differently about Romantown, of having ‘felt really in peace’:

When I came back to Romantown as a Muslim, that was the place I felt most comfortable because I knew there was some of our people..... Whereas I hadn't been to the city centre for 7/8 years and I went in and I didn't like it and I felt unsafe and I felt not right..... I walked down Romantown Road and suddenly I felt really in peace... and I can imagine for other immigrants coming in that they would feel like that too because I am English and I know this country and I know this area but I felt best in Romantown (Resident Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

Aiyesha as a Muslim convert always wore full Muslim dress which she was not allowed to do when living in France. Now that she has moved to Romantown, she felt relaxed to be recognised as a Muslim and to wear the hijab. In Chapter Two, Stuart Hall's work provided the theoretical tools to examine difference and potentials for tension when asking the question

‘why does difference matter?’ and it was this line of thinking that created theoretical support here (Hall, 1997, p234). For Aiysha wearing the hijab in France had created tension for her as wearing the hijab publicly contravened French law. In Britain and Romantown, in particular, this tension point ceased to exist where wearing the hijab in Britain was not illegal and many Muslims wore the hijab in Romantown, so as a Muslim she did not feel singled out:

Yes well, I think it is the mix. I think if there are lots of Muslims comes into it. If there are lots of people wearing scarves, I feel more comfortable and if that is accepted here, that is OK, it does play a part but, the fact that you know that there are all these different people and still getting on with it and not going to be looked at all the time, that is different from anywhere, then yeh I think it is great (Resident Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

In Romantown the binary black/white or in Aiysha’s case Muslim/non Muslim, had become less threatening where Islam predominates within the Pakistani culture and also within other newer immigrant, refugee and asylum groups that have moved into Romantown.

For Cheryl, an African Caribbean woman, also from the residents’ focus group, who came to Romantown three years ago with her son, it was the combination of multicultural and the familiarity of the village in Romantown that had appealed to her:

I come from an English village, in fact, we were the only non white people in the village and I actively wanted to move away from there to a city. I wanted to move to an area that had better facilities and I find Romantown. My experience of it so far is that it is cosmopolitan but it is also very friendly, it is also like a village really (Resident Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

Ironically, the closeness of predominantly white village life in Bedfordshire had sought to marginalise Cheryl as an African Caribbean woman, whilst Romantown had provided the welcome and diversity she wanted. Romantown to her was cosmopolitan and friendly but also had elements of the conviviality and closeness of village life that she had left behind. Romantown also opposed certain thinking on the inner city in that it was community based and caring for her instead of presenting ‘arenas of fear and dislocation’ (Neal and Walter, 2008, p283).

Like Cheryl, Jill whom I referred to earlier, also valued Romantown because it was small, ethnically diverse, neighbourly and friendly:

It does give it a friendly feel. I mean, I live on the bottom of Rockhill Road so we've got Pakistani, I think we have got one Bangladeshi family, Indian, African Caribbean, you know, British, Irish, Polish and German and most people have lived there for years and everybody gets on fine (Resident Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

The community based friendliness of Romantown is countered by some older residents who spoke of not wanting to mix particularly although they continue to remain within the community. One example of this was Alice an elderly white resident and another member of the residents' group who explained that she was content to remain in Romantown but was without friends:

It is not that I don't want to mix with anybody, it is just the way it happens. I just don't go. I don't actually go to church anyway. I like being on my own and I wouldn't have anyone to go with so therefore, so yes, it's not that I don't want to mix with anybody, I just prefer to be on my own (Resident Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

Although Alice says that she does not mix, she has remained with her husband in Romantown for 46 years and is a neighbourly presence in her street where my daughter lived temporarily, and Alice had helped her on many occasions. Barth supports thinking here where for Alice, outside Romantown could have been the arbitrary or uncertain existence that she did not want to face which resulted in her own brand of overt conformity from within, where she said that she did not mix with her neighbours (Barth, 1969). However again as with others, there were connections between herself and my daughter and other neighbours in their street, and good social relations were maintained.

These feelings of belonging and community in Romantown exist alongside expressions of limited community which was also shared by Aiysha, who, although feeling ‘at peace’ in Romantown, like Alice, felt she could not mix, this time with people who were not Muslim, although she considered herself neighbourly:

I chat with my neighbours and I have a good relationship with my neighbours, and I will do anything they ask of me..... but don't expect me to mix with them and become bosom buddies with them because I can't (Resident Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

Aiysha (my neighbour) lives a strict (self imposed) Islamic life and will not compromise this in any way. Yet she is as she says, very neighbourly, but differences are acknowledged between us in that she is a Muslim and I am not. Also, we have helped each other during times of illness but do not spend much time in each other's houses, but I know that I could call on her if I needed help. In Barthian terms, like Alice, her own brand of overt conformity is maintained where she feels she does not form friendships with her non Muslim neighbours (Barth, 1969). However, as with other groups within this community, she maintains a

connection with me and others in Romantown who are outside her close circle of acquaintances, family and friends.

Again it is this process of contact and withdrawal mirrored here that was evident with Sikh, Pakistani and African Caribbean residents previously although there are no historical links between these respondents. As previously stated, community for these respondents has different elements. For Aiysha it was religious freedom and protection; for Cheryl it was the re-emergence of the conviviality but without the marginalisation of the village she had left behind, combined with multicultural; and for Alice, it was the free community space that she wanted. For these respondents, there remains the 'them' and 'us' and an overt conformity to the group, but also a strong attachment to the primary community (Romantown) where they feel a sense of freedom from within rather than outside (Amit and Rapport, 2002, Barth, 1969). It is this appreciation of Romantown as an enabling space, combined with neighbourliness rather than friendliness, that retains the ebb and flow between these residents and creates a sense of community here (Barth, 1969). This also compares to the levels of contact between the Sikh and Pakistani communities, who liaise at public events and during times of racialised tension, but privately remain relatively separate. So, common elements of everyday discourse of community here are: geographic and historical links; collaboration; social space; neighbourliness; and the respect of cultural boundaries; that extend out to old, multi ethnic and new residents. However, it is also possible to see elements of imagined community, where Romantown presents: 'a mosaic of little worlds that touch but do not interpenetrate' (Park cited in Amit and Rapport, 2002, p42). Thus these latter elements introduce an ambivalence which, combined with hospitable elements, present a substantial sense of community in Romantown that was widely commented on in interviews and focus groups.

This next section approaches the crux of this thesis which determine how this sense of community will be transferred towards new groups of asylum seekers who have moved into the community, firstly from a residents' perspective and then by the asylum seekers themselves.

A common sense of community towards new asylum groups

Apart from the more tangible and imagined elements of community in Romantown, examined previously, migration is certainly a shared narrative for a large percentage of residents who live here. Therefore this commonality of understanding could provide the building blocks for empathy, hospitality and recognition of shared personal narratives with refugees and asylum seekers. A multicultural population is certainly one of the Audit Commission's recommendations (2000c) for conducive settlement as referred to in Chapter Three. Therefore policy assumptions would be that the impact of difference would not be so great between existing multi-ethnic residents with migratory histories and new migratory arrivals of asylum seekers.

To explore this idea further, I begin the discussion by focussing on Sima, a young Sikh woman from the residents' focus group. Sima reinforces policy assumptions of similarities rather than differences within ethnically diverse communities between old residents and new asylum seekers, and also the recognition of the stigma of the pariah that her own community had commonly shared with these newer asylum communities (Hall, 1997, Barth, 1969). She speaks of initial opposition from white residents to the arrival of her own community:

When Sikhs, Blacks and Muslims came over here the white communities were complaining that they were taking their jobs and all that, and now even our own are saying this about asylum seekers. It is kind of all going in full circle that people are taking our jobs, and its people that have said it to them and I find it really strange. I think people do accept things but they do, those comments that they make, and I think it is nice that they are in the areas where there are black people and different cultures so I would think it a good thing really. It is better than putting refugees into Middleton [a more affluent area] or, they would find it very difficult, whereas here it is a bit easier than being put in an area where there is.... I think it is a really good idea (Resident Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

Sima is part of a migratory history in which members of the Sikh community came to the UK to enter the workplace. However, her comments seem to show recognition of the cycle of settlement and acceptance for immigrants and she shares the concept of what it feels like to be new and recognises that this may be of value to asylum seekers. These common experiences between established residents and new asylum seekers can be sufficient for contact to be established and the ebb and flow to continue (Barth, 1969). However, there are issues about status that Nasir reflects on, later in this chapter, where he observes that Sikh and Pakistani residents were invited to the UK and asylum seekers were not. Also cultural differences that are discussed in this section and in the final section. On shared experience, Barth observed that: ‘many minority situations have a trace of this active rejection by the host population’ which would suggest that immigrant populations within Romantown could still suffer stigma by the host white populations. This was supported by Sima’s comments here as she felt that her own parents were stigmatised as new immigrants to Romantown. Barth also wrote about non-articulating sectors of life where minority groups are perceived as only having relevance to themselves and do not share relevance within the status system of the dominant majority group (Barth, 1969). He continued: ‘for the minority, these sectors constitute a ‘backstage’

where the characteristics that are stigmatic in terms of the dominant majority culture can covertly be made the objects of transaction' (ibid, p17). Therefore asylum seeker experiences can be more easily articulated here with existing migrant residents which would form the basis for relationships to be established.

Other common experiences of belonging, newness, culture and community in Romantown were observed by members of the residents' focus group. Abdullah (married to Aiysha) felt that the *multicultural* community enabled asylum seekers to meet people of their own nationality as well as other asylum seekers which would temper feelings of loneliness for them. As a French Muslim convert, he recognised some feelings of isolation felt by asylum seekers and he wished that the community of Romantown itself was larger or more multicultural so as to be increasingly effective in this process.

Everybody comes together because they are from another country, when they leave Afghanistan and arrive in Romantown and they meet other people, even if they are from far away, they come together, it is very good. It would be nice if Romantown would be bigger (Resident Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

Proximity however was not always a guarantee of contact within communities where as Park (cited in Amit and Rapport) observed: 'people might live alongside each other, cheek by jowl, but the social distance separating them could still be a chasm of class, ethnic, occupational and age difference', although Amit and Rapport did speak of informal meetings taking place, for example school run, shopping etc (Amit and Rapport, 2002, p42). However for Bushra, a young Pakistani girl from the residents' focus group, there were opportunities for a conviviality and unplanned spontaneity of community living in Romantown (Neal and

Walters, 2008, p283). Living near to Kurdish asylum seekers had meant that through child-minding, she came into close contact with her Kurdish neighbours:

I used to live on Macintosh Street and the Kurdish neighbours looking after me and we became quite friendly with them and we would learn about each other, and they would sit on the floor and they would send their food over which was really different to how we cook. How they made their soups and it was really nice (Resident Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

Abdullah, Cheryl and Sima joined Bushra, in speaking warmly of recently arrived asylum seekers in Romantown, again focussing on their newness and vulnerability as migrants:

Yes you know that they are new to the community. To me I just accept them all (Sima) These people have nothing. It is OK (Abdullah) (Resident Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

Cheryl's comments went further by suggesting that there was wasted opportunity here where many asylum seekers could be of benefit to Britain if they were allowed to work, and quoted an example:

The refugees and asylum seekers who I have come across have done degrees or done stuff in another country. One lady was Bosnian and had a degree in domestic science but she wanted to work in childcare and was brilliant. She was a very intelligent person and her English is fabulous (Resident Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

There were other common experiences with early Sikh settlers in the UK, where Bains observed ways in which early professional Sikh migrants were redirected into menial

employment in Denton (Bains, 1980, 1968, p33). Mr Singh's story concurred with Bains where he came to the UK to pursue his education but the government would not support him at that time so he had to find work, although he was grateful for his job at the Post Office.

Well in fact, I came here for the further education. Then when I came here obviously I need the money and at that time, the government, it was not their policy to support overseas student, like they do sometime, and obviously I needed some money so I had to work and I was very lucky that I had a Post Office job, so I worked there as a postman and then right after the, I retired from the postman many years you know (Fieldwork interview, 24 February, 2005)

Nasir (from the Pakistani community), suggested that Romantown could be an enabling space for asylum seekers (as it had been for his own community), where there were possibilities for Kurdish young men to open businesses and support a family. Nasir had also made friends with a young Kurdish asylum seeker, Ahmed, who sat through the interview with him. Although these two young men were culturally different, they shared similarities in that were both Sunni Muslim, and youth and entrepreneurship was also a common bond for them. Plus they shared a common sense of community and backstage understanding in which Romantown was being promoted as a place of opportunity rather than a multicultural ghetto (Back, 1996, Hall, 1988, Barth, 1969). In Barthian terms, both these young men, as Pakistani and asylum seeker, could be regarded as stranger or pariah through which a possible connection could be made; or simply that they held each other in high regard as friends. Nasir felt the new immigrants were now doing well and felt that Romantown was responsible for this:

I think the people in Romantown do a lot better than the people outside. Honestly I have seen Kurdish people coming to this country, I know a lot of Kurdish lads yeh, and they are doing so well for themselves, they are opening businesses, driving decent cars even in the process of buying a house. They settle down, have got children. You know having one or two children and supporting a wife is not cheap, it is not easy, you have to be obviously doing well to do that and it is happening, it's happening honestly
(Fieldwork interview, 27 February, 2005)

Nasir comes from a large local family so Ahmed, by befriending him, was also able to access his family which formed a large clan within the Pakistani community. Ahmed had married a Pakistani woman and again this had given him access to the Pakistani community and may ultimately enable him to stay in the UK. He is training to become a plumber and managing to find work although he still does not have residency. Nasir was supportive of Ahmed and generally felt that asylum seekers should be allowed to work and his comments shared elements of lost opportunity as suggested by Cheryl:

Rather than the government putting from their own pockets, the tax payers, you know they get £35 per week, and their rent is about £50-60 per week and there are other benefits like furniture and stuff yeh, washing machine yeh, you know your medical, rather than putting that, why don't you just give them permission to work and then pay tax. I have spoken to a lot of foreign people and they said exactly what I am saying now, Russians, they say the same to me, why can't we get permission, some people are sitting here for over six months and not... you can understand the first month or so yeh
(Fieldwork interview, 27 February, 2005)

Nasir wanted Ahmed to achieve success (like him) in business, but acknowledged barriers erected by policy makers (via the 1999 Act), although he acknowledged that asylum seekers could earn a living in Romantown even if policy dictated otherwise. Ahmed had also understood local dynamics of Romantown where speaking Urdu (linguistic similarities with

Punjabi) and English was of benefit to him as he could converse with both English and Pakistani (and also Sikh) communities:

I am sitting at home, I am not watching Kurdish channel, but English channel. What I am writing down and everything, I've got a girl, she give me present, she give me English to English dictionary no Kurdish to English. She say, that is better for you, the spelling, this is, will give you knowledge.....Pakistani, but I speak Urdu now
(Fieldwork interview, 27 February, 2005)

Through learning Urdu, Ahmed comprehended the importance of the hierarchical position of the Pakistani community in Romantown and reciprocated by learning to speak their language, but he also deferred to the host community and learnt to speak English as well. So, for Ahmed, reciprocation was taking place on two levels. Nasir may also have deferred to the white community by remaining in Romantown (discussed later in this chapter), where the Pakistanis have retired to their allocated and more visible space, and then displayed elements of reciprocity to the wider community by accepting Ahmed as a friend (Bauman, 1990). Friendships like Ahmed's with Nasir are quite rare, however, and tend to dispute rather than reinforce policy assumptions on acceptance where in Barthian terms, there still remains a propensity towards the overt conformity of the Pakistani cultural boundary (Barth, 1969). It is Ahmed's determination to integrate with this community however that has helped him succeed. As discussed, there were also incidences when proximity and empathy generally towards asylum seekers had brought people together, but it was the understanding of locality specific factors of Romantown by Ahmed that enabled him to integrate with the large Pakistani community and survive through getting work in Romantown. For other compatriots, their integration was not so successful, although there were other aspects of living in Romantown that helped here.

Asylum seekers' experiences of community in Romantown

The Kurdish community

As stated above, for other Kurdish asylum seekers reflecting on their own welcome within Romantown, feelings are more mixed, and the guarantees of successful dispersal to multicultural communities expounded by the Audit Commission are increasingly brought into question (Robinson et al, 2003, Audit Commission, 2000c). It is, however, large community networks of Kurds that have the overall effect of buffering some of the more hurtful responses that substantiate Audit Commission recommendations on the existence of asylum networks to aid successful dispersal and settlement (ibid). Initially, people were not here by choice but were dispersed by NASS (if they required support) so, to a certain extent, potentially the growth of networks was based on the density of numbers dispersed. Kurdish existence in Romantown had attracted others to the area (through drift and dispersal) although dispersals were still on a 'no choice' basis (1999 Act), thus networks had emerged in this way. It became apparent, through my fieldwork observation at the Refugee Advice Centre, that many asylum seekers, particularly Kurdish, drifted into Romantown from other cities, preferring to become destitute here rather than be dispersed to other cities where there were no established networks. Again in Barthian terms, a strengthening of cultural boundaries as a result of insecurity and tension would account for the build-up of Kurdish networks as a support mechanism in Romantown. As Barth observed: 'if a person is dependent for his security on the voluntary and spontaneous support of his own community, self-identification as a member of this community needs to be explicitly expressed and confirmed' or in this case, the creation of a strong community presence by the Kurdish community (Barth, 1969, p21). The wisdom of allowing people to gravitate towards those of similar backgrounds is discussed in Chapter Three (Robinson et al, 2003), and is also reported on by Robinson and Reeve for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2006). They suggest that existing networks rather than salubrious

neighbourhoods are seen as the main driver for successful settlement and clustering will occur where possible (ibid). They also observe that it is diversity generally that is the draw (Robinson and Reeve, 2006, Robinson et al, 2003). Kurdish asylum seekers from the focus group, liked multiculturalism which substantiated Robinson and Reeve's findings, and again, recommendations by the Audit Commission on multicultural locality for dispersal (Robinson et al, 2003, Audit Commission 2000c). The Kurdish respondents also highlighted the small scale nature and quality of the locality within Romantown, but also intimated that same language and culture were also factors:

You can find many different nationalities and this is good, that people can speak their language in the same areaSome of it is good. Romantown Road in particular, because it is multicultural and small you know and they say I can go to Romantown if I need something (Asylum Seeker Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

Like Ahmed, who was discussed earlier, some young Kurds spoke of their desire to form friendships outside their own community and make friends with English and Pakistanis within Romantown although they had perhaps not been so successful. As one young male participant explained:

We have been talking about getting to know some of the Pakistani people and some of the English people who are kind to us. We made, two months ago, made some holiday to Scotland with some Pakistani people (Asylum Seeker Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

This trip had been organised by Refugee Housing, with the assistance of young Pakistanis, and was reported a great success at the Refugee Forum meeting by the Refugee Housing

representative (Denton Refugee Forum, March 2005). Nasir also recalled help being given by the Pakistani community:

The Pakistani community have helped a lot. The Kurdish people need help and the Pakistani people have helped. I don't know about the elders, you know the youngsters (Fieldwork interview, 27 February, 2005)

This contrasts with other responses which suggest that the Pakistani community was unhelpful to the Kurdish community, but it may also reflect a split within the Pakistani community (both issues explored further in the final section). Again the Pakistani, and to a lesser extent, Sikh propensity to maintain genealogical boundaries, would seem to partially account for this. Nasir's overcompensation towards feelings of community in Romantown, which was also shared by Mr Singh, could also mean that communal sentiments towards asylum seekers could be imagined (Amit and Rapport, 2002, Anderson, 1991, 1983).

Another Kurdish respondent from the focus group also felt that approaches to the Pakistani residents was a sensible way forward, which reflects a certain amount of reciprocity by the Kurdish community towards the Pakistani community. I have used Bauman's observations in Chapter Two to support the hierarchical recognition that occurs between majority white and ethnic residents in which the latter have reciprocated and moved to their allotted space within the ethnically marked boundary that is Romantown. It is the Pakistani who is regarded highly within Romantown's community boundary and the Kurdish respondent has reciprocated in a similar way (Bauman, 1990). Like Ahmed, the Kurdish respondent appreciated the wisdom in this:

I speak to English people, of Pakistani, there is many in the neighbourhood live together, they give to me together to make some friendship something like that
(Asylum Seeker Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

Considering the potential size of the Kurdish community in Romantown, although there has been coverage in the national newspaper regarding fights with young Pakistanis, during which a young Pakistani attacked a young Kurd with a sword (*Daily Mail*, 3 January, 2004), tensions are rare. Again arbitrariness towards both the Pakistani and Kurdish communities from white communities could account for this where preservation of community space by these community residents is paramount. At the time of this incident, the Kurdish respondent from this article felt that the Pakistani community not only had problems with the Kurds but also the Indian and white communities too, thus suggesting that tensions within Romantown were more widespread (ibid). (Tension flashpoints and critical events will be discussed further in the next section and local divisions in the final section). There are elements here where the Kurds may want to retain a low profile because of destitute numbers, or purely out of respect for their Pakistani neighbours. The General Secretary of the Pakistani Community Centre in the *Daily Mail* article stated that people who expressed xenophobic views should: ‘cast their minds back to the late sixties and remember how they were treated when they first arrived in the UK’ (ibid, p29). These were similar sentiments to Sima’s observations on her parents’ settlement earlier and this again brings in Barthian thinking on shared experiences of pariah within society where earlier immigrants identify with more recent asylum seekers (Barth, 1969). He continued to say however: ‘live and let live, but you have to live in a certain way’ (ibid) which reflects a certain amount of tolerance towards the new migrants. However, within this statement, he also alludes to Kurdish behaviour, their lack of respect, their need to maintain a certain code of propriety towards their neighbours, and although not referred to specifically, their perceived hierarchical status in Romantown.

The Kurdish willingness to integrate and an acknowledgement to abide by certain community codes of behaviour was substantiated by Ahmed who spoke confidently of his fellow countrymen and saw himself and many of his friends leaving old ways behind and becoming part of community life:

Now they have their own business, there are a lot of Kurds keep away from fight especially and driving their licence, as soon as can open business and go through to other much better than before used to be. Because the bad thing from Kurds for two reasons to be honest, they do anything bad, one is fighting, secondly driving. This is what I can see. The driving will be sorted sooner or later because they get on slowly speeding taking less, the fighting, there isn't enough with each other, because before they know each other back home in different towns and villages, but now they eat at one table, they eat and drink from one table, so now they try to, so it is allowed as well
(Fieldwork interview, 27 February, 2005)

Like Sikh and Pakistani immigrant residents before them, Kurdish asylum seekers seem prepared to negotiate their differences and behave in a more community spirited way. Although, as previously discussed, there have been reports of tensions with the Kurdish community, mainly in the local press and again via the *Daily Mail*, the ambiguity in residents' responses towards this particular group seems to have disappeared with the initiation of faith community dialogue. (Local governance and dispersal is examined in the next chapter.) The Kurdish community, through its willingness to enter into dialogue with other ethnic groups, no longer as Douglas puts it: 'floats ambiguously in some unstable, dangerous, hybrid zone of indeterminacy' (Hall, 1997, p236, Bauman, 1990, Douglas, 1966). As already observed, there are also elements of reciprocity here (Bauman, 1990) to the Pakistani and Sikh communities. In this case, Iraqi Kurds were prepared to speak with local Sikh and Pakistani leaders to heal initial divisions. Thus through dialogue: 'unmistakeable signals as to what to expect' led to the

disappearance of ambiguities between these predominant groups (Bauman, 1990, p55). There are also elements of *schismogenesis* here (ibid) where all sides benefitted through exchange and compromise and were supported by the managing agencies to sustain this. In Barthian terms there now existed an ebb and flow between groups and tensions were avoided (Barth, 1969). This does not mean that the potential for tension has abated fully between the Kurdish and resident Pakistani and Sikh communities and I will return to an examination of these later in the chapter.

Other asylum seeker responses

Other asylum groups that individually number far less than the Kurdish migrants and are composed more of family groups, have found their experiences of settlement to be less confrontational than the Kurdish in Romantown. Misreadings of Romantown dynamics by the Persian Cultural Association however have raised some interesting questions on locality and hierarchy and are discussed in the final section. In contrast to the Kurdish community, these smaller groups have been able to organise themselves better, and, where cultural boundary markers are of significant importance in Romantown, more visibly into community associations (see Fig 1 at end of Chapter Four). These refugee community organisations (RCOs) have also managed a more regular representative appearance at the Refugee Forum, although recently their attendance seems to have waned (discussed in Chapter Six).

Nathanial, one of the Cameroonian respondents from the asylum seeker focus group who is also leader of the Cameroonian Community Centre in Romantown, reported how he misconstrued as aggressive a neighbour's offer of help:

Somebody knocking on my door at midnight and I was so frightened because in my country that midnight knock could be soldiers coming to arrest somebody. And so I said from the window, 'who are you?' He said, 'I am your next door neighbour.' I opened the door and he told me I had left the lights on in my car.' So I think it is really nice to know people and take the opportunity of.... You just come with them and sit outside.... And sit and drink beer and talk there and have mutual respect (Asylum Seeker Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

Nathanial actually lives in a less diverse neighbourhood north of Romantown yet still found people were prepared to be friendly. He has refugee status now, is married to an Italian, and is enrolled to study a degree at the local university, all of which ultimately may have helped him to integrate more easily. He was Chair of the Refugee Forum, but has now retired because of work and family commitments. He promoted the benefits of living in the UK by comparing his experience to living in Italy as an asylum seeker:

Yes because in Italy, you don't see a black man unless it is driving a bus. A black man is confined to cleaning jobs so why I came here was because of plenty of equal opportunities so I registered with Denton (University) (Asylum Seeker Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

Another asylum focus group respondent, Gilbert, from Zimbabwe remains in Romantown as a failed asylum seeker yet manages to make a living through being a gardener and general handyman, and is able to find work inside and outside Romantown (Gilbert is referred to further in Chapter Four). When I encountered him in the field, he existed on basic support from the Refugee Advice Centre for food and rent. He has recently been staying with a friend who has status, but because his friend's wife is joining him from Zimbabwe, he has moved to another house with other Zimbabweans. Gilbert becomes quite anxious when his life changes like this but he has good friends who support him. As he explains about Romantown:

Romantown is a good place to live but you are under pressure if you are not employed

(Asylum Seeker Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

As a failed asylum seeker, he is particularly vulnerable and if he has no work ostensibly he does not eat. However, Gilbert admits to feeling reasonably safe living in Romantown and is able to benefit from its advantageous dynamics, discussed by Nasir earlier, but he also understands that to remain, he, like other asylum seekers, must keep a low profile:

(Do you feel confident here?) I do. People are confident... they take their own role in a different way. Accepting where they are and abide by the system (Asylum Seeker Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

When the focus group meeting was convened, there was no Zimbabwean Association but a group formed at the end of 2006 and now acts as support for its members, although Zimbabwean numbers are still comparatively few (50-60) when compared with other groups like the Iraqi Kurds for example. Gilbert, as well as managing to find work, is also now attending courses at local college outlets in Romantown which will add to his skills if and when he eventually is granted leave to remain.

Some refugee and asylum groups seem to function better with the support of associations, though the Kurdish community seem to function quite well without, although in Romantown they receive help from the Refugee Advice Centre and other refugee community organisations (RCOs). The presence of an association, however, does make it easier for agencies to access people and also creates a more visible presence locally for residents. The most recent migrant association to emerge (2007) has been for Polish EU migrant workers.

Since dispersal began to Romantown in 2001, there are many disparate groups (of various sizes), yet Romantown appears to retain a measure of mutuality and social cohesiveness as evidenced in participants' comments about Romantown's 'community spirit' and being a friendly place. There is a history of alliances between the Sikh, Pakistani and African Caribbean communities who arrived together and supported each other through difficult times, but also elements of alliances with those white communities that remained when many others had left the area. New residents like Cheryl, Sima, Mohammad and Aiysha found the multicultural element of Romantown able to provide a protected place where they felt safe, unhampered and 'at peace'. Interview and focus group data showed how participants thought of Romantown as an enabling place where multiculturalism helped the integration of asylum seekers. Asylum seekers also expressed how they felt the benefits of common bonds of immigration and multiculturalism in Romantown, where they wanted to integrate and belong.

Research findings from the first part of this chapter, present the face of community practice based on long established co-operation between older immigrant groups who have been willing to co-operate to preserve the comfortable elements of their community. Barthian thinking is upheld in which cultural boundaries are erected and the ebb and flow between these older communities continues but ethnic boundaries are retained (Barth, 1969, 1966). As cited in Chapter Two, Barth said: 'where there is less security and people live under a great threat of arbitrariness and violence outside their primary community, the insecurity itself acts as a constraint on inter-ethnic contacts (in this case with the greater white community)' which results in evidence of the firm community boundaries in place around Romantown (Barth, 1969, p21). However, Barth says that lack of trust also results in overt conformity *within* the cultural boundary where too much interplay with other ethnic groups may be seen as weakening the group, thus resident cultural boundaries *within* Romantown remain rigid

particularly within the Pakistani community (Barth, 1969). This uncertainty of multiculturalism creates a common narrative of migration for new Muslim/ethnic resident groups and asylum seekers in that the community boundary provides the protective marker but the insecurity again acts as a 'constraint on inter-ethnic contact' (ibid). Thus the notion of 'community' overall in Romantown is retained as a place of safety and comfort, but still retains smaller elements of marked community within it. It is however the persistent ebb and flow between groups, particularly earlier settlements of Sikh and Pakistanis, which has helped to maintain good community living which links in with Barthian thinking raised in Chapter Two (Barth, 1969).

As far as asylum seekers are concerned, their problems are similar and different to resident immigrant populations in that their status is more arbitrary, and initially still takes on general echoes of the 'stranger' as observed by Bauman and Douglas in Chapter Two (Bauman, 1990, Douglas, 1966). However in Barthian terms, as meetings take place between the Pakistani/Sikh residents and the asylum leaders, the fear of the 'stranger' may diminish, but mistrust still acts as a constraint on overt inter-ethnic contact, especially from residents, even though the external perception of pariah creates a common bond (Barth, 1966, 1969). The heavily defined 'community' boundary in Romantown still serves to protect asylum seekers from the arbitrariness of the wider community however, and provides an enabling place for them to live in many ways. Large Kurdish networks and a willingness to reciprocate to the Pakistani community particularly has helped to establish a community presence, although it is not clear enough in policy terms, where the Kurdish community are unwilling to form as an RCO (discussed further later in this chapter and in Chapter Six). Thus boundaries have been established and the ebb and flow with residents is possible, but concern remains as to how established these lines of communication are, and that a certain amount of contact between

Pakistani residents and asylum seekers could be imagined. On a more informal level, there is increased opportunity for face to face community where people are able to engage in the everyday of urban living, whether this takes place at schools or in homes, an example cited here being where Bushra exchanged food with her Kurdish neighbours. Thrift argued: 'that cities also have to be thought of, designed and recognised as 'potential nests of kindness' (Neal and Walters, 2008, p283, Thrift, 2005, p143). He continued that: 'the looser ties of friendship and conviviality...have the most to offer in keeping cities resilient and caring' (ibid, p146). Thus the conviviality of community can flourish although as discussed, inter-ethnic contact is still somewhat curtailed.

It has been unforeseen events that *particularly* affected residents in Romantown which have sparked tensions and which diminished this element of safe predictability when dispersing asylum seekers here, that risked bringing community relations to a halt. The national and local media have been particularly vociferous in reporting any schism arising in Romantown between residents, agencies and asylum seekers where, from a policy perspective, asylum dispersal was expected to be less problematic (*Daily Mail*, 2004). Although, in the first part of this chapter, Romantown residents spoke of how they enjoyed and valued the sense of a local community, lack of funding for key agencies (discussed in Chapter Six), and unfortunate policy decisions, added to the unco-operative nature of the press, has hampered rather than assisted asylum integration. The effect of these external forces on community within Romantown and the role of the media nationally and locally to responsibly report on dispersal issues are discussed in the next section as a pre-emptor to more probing questions on community cohesion which are approached in the final section.

Flashpoints and media: the impact of external factors on Romantown

During my time in the field, it became apparent that it was local events rather than populist concerns that sparked local reactions to asylum seeker dispersal, discussed further here. It is the role of the media in this and the ways in which dispersal to Romantown has been reported nationally and locally that the chapter now examines.

The national media on local issues

Inclination towards irresponsible reportage from the media on the asylum issue generally has been commented on by other researchers (Robinson and Reeves, 2006, ICAR, 2005, 2004, Home Office, 2004b, D’Onofrio and Munk, 2003, Barclay et al, 2003), and researched on recently by Finney and Robinson, who recommend that local newspapers should accurately reflect local discourses on asylum and dispersal (2007). Accuracy of reportage was also the subject of a report conducted by ICAR and commissioned by the Mayor of London, entitled *Reflecting asylum in London’s communities*, where key findings suggested ‘unbalanced and inaccurate reporting likely to promote fear and tension within communities across London’ and most evidence of this it felt was found in the national rather than local press (ICAR, 2005, p9).

An article written about Romantown in the *Daily Mail* in January 2004 headlined: ‘The New Race Timebomb’, incorporated much of the racial stereotypical language associated with reportage on asylum targeted by the ICAR report. Here the *Mail* described Romantown as the ‘frontline’ with connotations of it being a war zone. The main focus of the article was that it was not white communities that were complaining about placement of asylum seekers but Asian residents, and the reporter targeted two respondents from the Sikh and Pakistani

communities. Although the tone of the article suggested a duplication of populist complaints from both these communities regarding asylum, on closer inspection, the Pakistani respondent was more concerned about Romantown itself, Pakistani youth and the community being labelled as a place that nurtured terrorism in the wake of one of its sons, Omar Khan Sharif's attempt to blow himself up in an Israeli bar in Tel Aviv. Although there had been some tensions between young Pakistanis and young Kurds (the sword incident according to the *Daily Mail* and referred to earlier), the view of the Pakistani spokesman had been one of reflection on their own settlement (already discussed). He added that the new immigrants had to acknowledge local codes of behaviour and respect the local community to be accepted and he complained about their anti social behaviour (also referred to earlier) (*Daily Mail*, 3 January, 2004). It was the Sikh respondent who focused more on direct problems with the Kurds in that he felt obliged to buy expensive metal shutters to safeguard his shop.

Rather than general antipathy towards asylum seekers however, it was culturally specific issues reported by both Sikh and Pakistani communities in particular where Asian women were being harassed by young Kurds (reported by the *Daily Mail* and local newspapers, referred to in responses and a finding in my original MSc questionnaire) (ibid, Richards, 2002). Frank exchanges on local Pakistani radio during Ramadan, prior to the article (beginning 24 October, 2003) (also reported by the *Daily Mail*) between the General Secretary of the Pakistani Community Centre and the Kurdish community leader were also reported. Although the general tone of the article was unhelpful, it managed to highlight potential areas for concern, so it contained elements of good local reporting although the headline helped to smokescreen these.

The newspaper however still presented the general view of Romantown as the poor inner city rather than a vibrant multicultural community, in which government policy decisions to indiscriminately disperse asylum seekers were blamed for rising tensions. Again these were generalisations and not necessarily reflective of my fieldwork findings (see above).

Local media and policy mistakes

A key local event, covered by the local media, focussed on a doctor's surgery that was to be specifically allocated to asylum seekers. Again sensationalist language was used in attempts to inflame local reaction and the tone of reporting was very much in line with the *Daily Mail* (*Denton Evening Telegraph*, 1 September, 2004, 9 September, 2003, 24 February, 2003, 4 September, 2002). As Finney and Robinson (2007) concluded in a majority of cases they investigated: 'the dominant national discourse is not locally contested' (ibid, p20) and this was evident here. However Finney and Robinson found examples of more responsible media coverage in Cardiff compared to Leeds which again tended to reinforce populist asylum seeker stereotypes. They attributed more responsible reporting in Cardiff to its history of migration and differing views on 'race' generally, where concentrations were more on local use of the Welsh language, English in-migration and that (in their imaginings) people were generally more welcoming to immigrants (ibid).

Arguably it had been policy mistakes that apparently incensed local residents in Romantown. The text accompanying local headlines such as: 'Asylum seekers to get own GP'; 'Surgery stays, refugees only'; 'Anger on Bale Street Surgery saga'; 'What a carry on doctors'; suggested that again it was local Asian populations who were complaining about surgery places being given to asylum seekers and that they were being forced to go elsewhere, and

there were examples given (*Denton Evening Telegraph*, 1 September, 2004, 24 February, 2003, 9 September, 2002, 4 September, 2002). When the surgery's practice nurse Carol was asked about local attitudes towards the surgery, she felt that there were no hostile feelings towards asylum seekers, but rather that residents were angry at the closure of the old surgery. She also thought that tensions were promoted by the media:

No I don't think the practice had any impact on it at all. I think the hostilities that the practice seemed to get was media inspired rather.... Because certainly the people in the area where the practice was, when for whatever reason we had to approach them like somebody's car has broken down, when we had to knock on somebody's door, they were quite welcoming, quite happy about it and helpful. And we never had any vandalism which again is what you would have expected... I think it was mainly the fact the practice had been closed down and the other was being set up (Fieldwork interview, 6 May, 2005)

The articles claimed that the surgery was eventually closed because of low numbers of asylum seekers using the practice and also the retirement of the GP who ran it. However, when a mobile service *The New Entrant Service* was initiated by the NHS, again the local press were active in attempting to label this as a waste of time and public money (*Denton Evening Telegraph*, 22 April, 2005). This new service was quite innovative in that it meant the NHS was managing to cater for the illegal and the destitute more easily, through mobile surgeries at the Refugee Advice Centre and other venues, so was in fact reaching hard to access groups. Carol was also becoming highly specialised in particular health problems relating to asylum seekers and was able to pass her expertise onto other healthcare professionals. None of this was reported by the article.

Although dispersal to Romantown has now begun again, following a three year break (2006), the local council has been active in ensuring that no more single young Kurdish men are dispersed into Romantown because of (potential) rising tensions in the past. Now only a few family groups are allowed in each month over a six month period when this dispersal will finish. On this occasion, the local newspaper attempted to be informative about dispersal starting up again and headlines and reportage have been low key rather than sensationalist (*Denton Evening Telegraph*, 16 November, 2005). Although the local newspaper still used words such as ‘influx’ in its leader headline on the front page, the headline was small and led through to a much larger article inside the front cover entitled: ‘City set to be home for new batch of asylum seekers: Council leader feels ‘a moral obligation’; the word ‘home’ having possible connotations of a place of welcome for asylum seekers (ibid). It proceeded through to another story entitled: ‘How refugees struggled to build their new lives’, and here the focus was on the experience of the Congolese leader’s torture in his own country and how grateful he and others including the Kurdish leader were to be in the UK (ibid).

This more recent coverage seemed to indicate a change to more responsive reporting of the area by the local media and one which promoted multiculturalism. As Finney and Robinson observed in Cardiff: ‘the positive discourse evident in Cardiff has political potential to shift the national and international lens on asylum and immigration from one of control and defence to one of opportunity and humanitarianism. There is the potential here for the localised discourse to reinvent the national’ (2007, p22). National media coverage of Romantown, as stated, was less than complimentary and portrayed Romantown as an area of entrenched multiculturalism and poverty in which asylum dispersal was adding to the hardships already there.

Lack of local knowledge was again an issue in Romantown when interviewing Sharon, a reporter with connections to the local BBC, who observed:

I can't really see much that there is any difference between what goes on there and what goes on anywhere else to be perfectly honest. You know I imagine the difficulties I hear from people in that area are pretty much the same difficulties as people anywhere would.....Just walking around and looking at the shops and housing stock indicates that it is a relatively poor area compared to a lot of other places. It looks like a lot of other inner city areas (Fieldwork interview, 18 February, 2005)

She dealt with refugee community organisations fairly regularly through the charity that she worked for, but her responses indicate generalised assumptions about multiculturalism and an absence of the recognition of the local world of Romantown and its sense of community.

Although media reportage on Romantown's asylum settlement has been at the best fair and encouraging and at worst very negative, generalist and inflammatory, there are aspects to asylum settlement in which local policy initiatives failed, and caused concern to local residents and asylum seekers alike. However, in an overarching attempt to reinforce populist concerns, the national media failed to create the local picture and local media had initially followed in a similar way although eventually became more responsive to local issues.

Despite often unhelpful media coverage, local issues and dynamics remained to cause problems in Romantown and the final section of this chapter probes more deeply into aspects for potential concern. It initially examines the effects of changes in community demographics as community groups fragment as residents move to other parts of the city, and remaining communities have to compete for finite resources. The section then proceeds to focus on the effects that change had on 'community' and how fieldwork data revealed a range of hostilities

and tensions from within existing and changing resident dynamics and from newly dispersed groups of asylum seekers.

Disparate Communities: multiculture, partial segregation and social change

Mobility and the process of resident change in Romantown

The arrival of large numbers of New Commonwealth immigrants from the 1950s onwards as described in the first section of this chapter, meant an unprecedented population change within inner cities like Romantown. In many cases this resulted in the fragmentation of existing white communities, and the *white flight* phenomenon coming into common usage as many white populations migrated to the suburbs. From the beginning of the 1980s, large numbers of white residents in Romantown followed similar paths and were moving out to newly built housing estates, leaving the inner city areas to new immigrant populations. As Romantown became increasingly cordoned off as a multicultural neighbourhood, its high ethnic concentration brought with it a reputation for drug abuse and crime and became a signifier as somewhere to be avoided (Hawkins and Fox, 2004). Hawkins and Fox drew analogies of this external localised characterisation of Romantown (like the journalist) as similar to that of many inner city neighbourhoods in which Romantown was described as: ‘a ghetto... (where) drug abuse and crime become the only signposts by which Romantown is known beyond its geographical parameters’ (ibid, p13). However, their publication sought to promote rather than denigrate Romantown, and they described the community as ‘a site of constant intercultural exchange, and cannot simply be reduced to being the ghetto of one diasporic community or one ethnic minority’ (ibid).

Some of the respondents from the residents' focus group knew of Romantown's local reputation, but others were surprised at what they heard. Aiyesha, from the residents' focus group, recalled her own outsider viewpoint before she moved to live in Romantown:

I knew it before so actually yes, I can draw comparisons because I knew it back then, and I thought 'who could live there?' I thought it was just awful. I mean that was many, many years ago, yes I would never have thought that I would end up living there
(Residents Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

Cheryl, also from this group, however expressed surprise at how Romantown was perceived by people who lived outside the community. She had moved to Romantown from a country village wanting a friendly but multicultural area for her son:

I found that after I had been here for a while, people would tell me horror stories about Romantown and I would say, 'well I live in Romantown (Residents Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

Alice, also from the focus group, decided not to leave Romantown when the demographics changed radically. She has lived here now for 46 years, and described the extent of the social and cultural changes in the area. She, like Cheryl, recalls being surprised at local attitudes towards Romantown and its ethnic residents and hints here at some of the accompanying tensions:

Romantown Road itself. Many years ago there was nothing on Romantown Road. Now every other shop is either selling things or restaurants or something like that, and there is quite a diversity of food, a majority perhaps Asian..... there were two obviously middle class white people... and one of them was saying 'oh you know, it is getting terrible with these coloureds coming and everything and it is going to be liquorice allsorts in a bit and I wasn't secure enough in myself to say anything, but I thought 'I like liquorice allsorts' (Residents Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

Although Alice, as an older white resident, indicated her opposition to racism and her support for the increasing multiculturalism of Romantown, Aiyesha spoke of an aunt of hers, another long term resident who had remained in Romantown all her life despite hating the changes:

My aunt, she lived most of her life on Stoney Street and she was here when the first arrivals came here and she didn't like it.....She felt that her community was being eroded. She wouldn't accept and she just didn't understand these people..... she stayed until she died and she wasn't happy (Residents Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

In Chapter Two I have used Neal's writings to describe loss of identity and the movement of white residents away from the multicultural inner city in search of white quintessential Englishness (Neal, 2002). Aiyesha's aunt who chose to stay, suffered from isolation where she found the point of difference with her new ethnic neighbours too great. Also in Chapter Two I have used Wallman's writings to surmise this difference in attitudes where she asked: 'what differences of context account for marked contrasts in ethnic relations within the same inner city?' (Wallman, 1988, p235). Alice and Aiyesha's aunt were both of an older generation that were not taught about religious diversity in schools, and yet both had very different views on their ethnic neighbours. In Barthian terms the ebb and flow retained good community relations

for Alice, yet for Aiyesha's aunt, contact broke down completely. Ironically, Aiyesha's own attitude to Romantown changed dramatically when she came to live here as a Muslim. She was experiencing the benefits of its protective space, as was Alice, but she could describe certain perceptions of stigma associated with the community quite accurately and which still remain. Some of the older generations, like her aunt, felt unable to leave and remained trapped, isolated and angry as their (white) community disintegrated.

Sima, from the residents' focus group, also felt that some of the younger Sikhs were now moving out of Romantown as their financial situations improved, to distance themselves from what they perceived as the stigma of living there:

A lot have become financially better off and retired from here..... I think then you get the ghettos here. I think it is OK for the older generations, but some of the younger generations they want to get out..... Yes I think it is good in the sense that you can keep your customs but I think that younger people still want to mix outside and find out about other people (Residents Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

The movement of Sikh residents away from Romantown may signify their wish to integrate more with white populations (which was commented on by Bains earlier). It may also indicate that the fear of threat from the wider community has somewhat dissipated towards them. It could also be the result of choice where as Sima comments, younger Sikhs, as their financial situations improve, want to distance themselves from the perceived stigma of living in Romantown. The main choice of Sikh re-settlement is west and south of the city centre and Romantown. The largest migration appears in a ward south of the city where there is an 8.95% Indian and Pakistani population of which the Indian Sikhs form a 6.93% population, which is second only to the white population of 82.36% (Weller and Wolfe, 2003, Census, 2001). Here

the multiple deprivation scale drops from 44.70 in Romantown to 39.68 in this adjacent ward, so the move could signify some improvement in status for them although the improvement in statistical terms is not great; or simply a desire to integrate with the wider population (ONS, 2000). Other similar Sikh movements have been to a more affluent ward west of the city where Indian and Pakistani populations form 9.31% of which the Indian Sikhs form 6.71%, which again is second only to the white population of 84.80% (Census, 2001). Here there is a considerable drop in the multiple deprivation scale to 17.94, and for younger Sikhs moving away from Romantown for reasons of stigma, a move here (in their imaginings) would indicate a significant improvement in status. However this view may not necessarily be shared with the elders/residents within their community who (as Sima observes), remain behind in Romantown for cultural security.

Dr Buller, the research participant based in the local university and an ex long term resident of Romantown, captures the idea of Romantown as a community of constant change:

Clearly people from many different communities have lived in that area and have then moved on... the Irish community has moved on, particularly the Hindu and Sikh communities have moved in and moved on and refugees and people seeking asylum, those communities are just the next wave of communities that are coming in, regenerating the area.... Other communities haven't for economic reasons, for religious reasons and so on. So for me the area, yes it has lots of problems, has lots of economic disadvantage, it has lots of issues, but in its wider sense it is an area that has generated opportunity and I think that that is sometimes forgotten because it is labelled as an area with problems (Fieldwork interview, 26 October, 2004)

As members of the Sikh community move out, it is the less expansive and more segregated and hard to reach communities that remain. Where, for Sikh residents, Romantown has

presented a place of financial opportunity, for others (including asylum seekers), it potentially becomes a place of restriction and limitation. Apart from the adjacent inner city ward to Romantown where there is a 35% Pakistani population (plus the 20% settlement in Romantown), there is no significant settlement of this group elsewhere in the city, which indicates a stagnation within these two inner city wards where the multiple deprivation scale is high as discussed. Kurdish asylum seekers are also restricted by *no choice* dispersal and are only settled within the Romantown postcode in Denton. Nasir observed the difficulties members of his (the Pakistani) community could encounter if they moved to other parts of the city:

(If) loads of us start moving out into Middleton, the locals would start to think 'what is going on here?' It is something they have never seen and it is something new because they hear stories (Fieldwork interview, 27 February, 2005)

He also felt that the more affluent suburbs were places of work for his community rather than residential areas to live. Again the notion of the pariah is evident in that Nasir feels that the Pakistani community is stigmatised by the wider community. Barth observed: 'the boundaries of pariah groups are most strongly maintained by the excluding host population, and they are often forced to make use of easily noticeable diacritica to advertise their identity'. Barth also observed that: 'the problem is reduced to a question of escaping the stigmata of disability by dissociating with the pariah community and faking another origin' (Barth, 1969, p17). The Pakistani therefore may not wish to move away from the primary community (Romantown) on two counts: 1) for fear of threat because of general anti-Muslim/Pakistani sentiment; and 2) because they do not wish to dilute their culture in any way to be accepted by the wider community. Nasir speaks of his anxieties about anti-Muslim sentiment in areas which do not have Muslim residents:

Average areas like Torsden, Castleston and Washton and Sandon yeh, there are good people and bad people there. Through business, I have been in the local shop in certain areas you get to know the community..... 50 of our houses from Romantown moved to Washton, I don't know what the reaction would be. Because there is only one or two houses there or shops it is not affecting them....Because we are there just trading and we are providing a service for them..... Islamaphobia against Muslims recently, there has been a lot of hatred (Fieldwork interview, 27 February, 2005)

As traders outside Romantown, the Pakistani position is known and, as supported by Bauman's observations in Chapter Two: 'send us an unmistakeable signal as to what to expect' (Bauman, 1990, p55). Where they become neighbours outside Romantown, Nasir feels their identities would be more ambiguous. Within the ethnically diverse community of Romantown, the wider population also knows where the strangers (Pakistanis and asylum seekers) are. Nasir's acknowledgement of anti Muslim sentiment reflects generally on Pakistani communities withdrawing rather than expanding outwards as Sikh and other communities have done. In Barthian terms too, fear of arbitrariness from outside Romantown has created an overt conformity within the Pakistani community which is compounded by their tendency to form endogamous relationships by marrying first cousins. As Tariq Modood said: 'when Muslims do not feel threatened and powerless, they have been outward-looking and expansive, generous and universal, however, negative media coverage has forced many Muslim communities to close ranks in order to create an invisibility from where they can rebuild their status from within' (Modood, *Observer*, 30 September, 2001). The history of Pakistani immigration into Romantown, however, does not necessarily reflect Modood's sentiments in which early observations by Bains observed them to be a self segregating group and these elements are still retained. Pakistani numbers have increased overall from 2476 in 1981 to around 7969 in total in the city in 2001, and as at the 2001 Census, they number 2,707

or 20% of the population of Romantown (Weller, and Wolfe, 2003, ONS, 2001, Census 1981).

As Pakistani presence increased in Romantown, splits within the community occurred based on regional identities and family clans, and also culturally between Punjabis and non-Punjabis in line with Bains' (1980, 1968) observations of early Pakistani settlement. Bains commented further on the propensity to self segregate by Pakistanis, when compared to other immigrants in Romantown, and quoted Nicholas Deakin: 'Of all the migrations from the Commonwealth the Pakistani presents the greatest contrast.....to Pakistanis it was a foreign land (Britain) whose language, customs, religion and way of life were totally alien to them. Their loyalties were to their own new nation (Pakistan), to their region to their village and above all to their kin. They came to England asking nothing of their hosts except to settle for a while, work and earn for their families at home, to whom they meant to return' (Bains, 1980, p32, 1968, Deakin, 1969, p292,).

Sikh movement away from Romantown and negative press towards the Pakistani community may have also produced a rift between the Sikh and Pakistani communities where historically, as observed in the first section of this chapter, there had been actual and imagined alliances between these two groups. In policy terms, as Sikh numbers decreased, there was now an uncertainty of cohesiveness within Romantown where previously there had been assumptions of alliances between these two large communities (discussed further in Chapter Six). Also, dynamics continued to change as new immigrant groups and residents moved in; and the non-communicative nature of the Pakistani community created difficulties of access, which made accurate readings of community relations harder to achieve. As Nasir had reflected on their relationship:

In them days, the Sikh community got on fine with the Pakistani community the reason being that they have come over to this country, they are very new and they need to stick together.....India and Pakistan is one country actually (Fieldwork interview, 27 February, 2005)

But negative media reportage he felt had affected the trust within their relationship:

All this on the media yeh, you feel it. You know sometimes you can talk to an Indian, a Sikh or something, you can feel it that he is not very clean from the heart, he is talking on the side... ..(Fieldwork interview, 27 February, 2005)

In Barthian terms, lack of trust between these two large communities had the effect of strengthening internal community boundaries and potentially this could mean that the ebb and flow between them decreased. Again it is the fear of threat from the outside by the Pakistani community; outward migration by the Sikh community; and a resultant lack of trust felt towards the Sikh community by the Pakistani community; that could curb inter-ethnic contact and as a result become a threat to cohesiveness in the community (Barth, 1969). There were also elements of the pariah hinted at here in that Nasir felt marginalised by his erstwhile collaborators.

As Sikh communities moved out, it was therefore the less expansive Pakistani community that remained to present the face of welcome to new dispersals of asylum seekers. Although Pakistanis and Kurds were both Sunni Muslim, it was the clannish nature of the Pakistanis in Romantown that sought to separate the community rather than mix with new cohorts of Kurdish asylum seekers, and it is this reluctance to mix that is examined here.

Asylum communities: hostilities and isolation

Apart from some examples of friendship, there remains to this day a certain amount of ambiguity regarding relationships between the new arrivals of Kurds and the Pakistani community. When I spoke informally with a local Imam, he told me a story about a destitute Spanish Muslim who had moved into a local mosque. After much persuasion, the Imam had convinced the local committee of Pakistani elders that this man should be allowed to remain and that he should be fed. When I asked him about whether any support and resources were provided to local populations and asylum seekers, he said that most local Pakistani Muslims considered that people living in the UK were not poor, that 90% of charity monies were sent overseas to places like Kashmir, and that monies would not be specifically allocated to asylum seekers. However he did say that the community would help people in extreme poverty and gave a single example of a woman in Nottingham who had been helped from local funds. There were examples however of more formalised Sikh charity that will be discussed in the next chapter.

As Sikh populations have increasingly left Romantown and new refugee and asylum groups arrive, dynamics have changed. In Barthian terms, boundaries needed to be established between these new groups for the maintenance mechanism to continue as new asylum groups have no cultural, allegiant or political connections to not just the Sikh and Pakistani communities but *any* of the resident populations. It is therefore understandable that this lack of connection created problems initially with the Kurdish asylum seekers. As Robinson and Reeve (2006) suggested, new immigrant groups would need to: ‘share aspects of their background and identity with existing residents’, and this was not the case here, although as previously stated, Kurds and Pakistanis generally were both Sunni Muslim.

There were common strands of immigration between Sikh and Pakistani communities and asylum seekers as discussed in section one, but there were also particular points of difference which became apparent. The similarities in religion between the Kurdish asylum seekers and Pakistani residents did not prevent rifts between these two large groups. As discussed earlier, there is an overt conformity to culture, rather than religion, within the Pakistani community and it was history, geographical location and culture, not religion, that bound them to the Sikh community. Therefore, it was from this particular site of difference that tensions could and did rise with the Sikh and Pakistani communities and the new Kurdish arrivals. Bauman observations in Chapter Two supported the view that when new immigrant groups arrive, they will be assigned to a subordinate position rather than an ambiguous category initially (Bauman, 1990), and trouble began when the Kurdish asylum seekers initially failed to accept this position of subordination.

Nasir presented an example of differences in status between the Pakistani and Sikh residents whom he still regards in the collective, and the new immigrants:

The Pakistani and the Indian, they already have residency here, the Pakistani people didn't come here for asylum, they came here on work permits (Fieldwork interview, 27 February, 2005)

And Mr Singh, (a Sikh elder), voiced strong disapproval of Kurdish behaviour:

In the beginning it was negative, because everyone was frightened of them you know. Where they come from you know. Obviously they were very negative views of people. And when they came over here we all had a concern with... that's the main thing you know, every time it seemed, everybody was of the opinion that these people are very, very rough, and when they are driving car, they are driving without licence you know, road tax, they don't care you know, and I have a very typical example you know, I was parking in St John's Road and there is a big lorry there in front of me and the road was blocked and a guy from that community came and he drive on the pavement you know (Fieldwork interview, 24 February, 2005)

Again there were strong elements of the stranger here where: 'by their sheer presence, which does not fit easily into any of the established categories, that strangers deny the very validity of the accepted oppositions' (Bauman, 1990, p54). From Mr Singh's viewpoint there was the need to construct precise boundaries around the stranger which: 'send us an unmistakable signal as to what to expect', where despite the stranger remaining visible, the ambiguity disappears (ibid, p55). Community minded behaviour initially from the young Kurds may have achieved a more acceptable community boundary; a less ambiguous opposition; and show a recognition of the subordinate position that the new immigrants into Romantown were expected to take.

Nasir also echoed sentiments of bad behaviour referred to by Mr Singh and the Pakistani respondent in the *Daily Mail* article. Again, as discussed in section one, when tensions arose with the Kurdish community, it was this old alliance between the Sikh and Pakistani communities that re-emerged and Nasir informed me that both communities attempted to dissuade NASS from dispersing asylum seekers to the area:

You know previous, last year yeh, (2002) when the asylum seekers first came into this country, the Pakistani community and the Sikh community they were going to stop renting houses to them and the reason for that was that they let you get a few bad apples, in a box of apples you get a couple of bad ones. Certainly some, drinking, and late nights, got music on and the whole streets, because of this kind of behaviour and I remember them meeting, and the Sikhs were saying what should be done. They were going to stop renting houses. They said if the government is not going to do anything about this, we are going to do something (Fieldwork interview, 27 February, 2005).

It is the elites or elders who are speaking for the group in this instance but also the old alliance between the Sikh and Pakistanis emerges to make community decisions on dispersal (faith community involvement is discussed in Chapter Six). In Barthian terms it exemplifies the strength (and porosity) of the community boundaries, but also illustrates elements of fear of the unknown that results in overt conformity to individual group boundaries where elders speak for the whole group (Barth, 1969). However, in these instances, the ebb and flow persists between the Sikh and Pakistani communities (ibid) but the danger still remains that connections with the Kurds could break down.

These divisions with the Kurdish asylum seekers also pervaded places of worship. There had been resentment towards young Kurds at the main mosque on Briarhill Street in Romantown (Fig 1) where many of the Pakistani elders attended Friday prayers. New mosques, including a Kurdish mosque, are now opening where the younger Pakistanis go and young Kurds have been more welcome there. Nasir felt that part of this disapproval towards Kurdish asylum seekers was probably a more general objection to youth by the elders within his community:

The guys at Briarhill Mosque, they've got this thing about youngsters that we are a bit too radical and trouble causers. He (Ahmed his Kurdish friend) went in there, took one book, sat down and got the book and 'what you?' because he was looking for a book like this and they thought he was mistreating it (Fieldwork interview, 27 February, 2005)

Again there are elements of mistrust towards the Kurdish asylum seeker, this time by the Pakistani elders, in which fear of the stranger re-emerges to block relations between the Pakistani and Kurdish communities (plus added concerns about youth raised by Nasir, and which was flagged up for concern in the media section by the Pakistani respondent). This feeling of resentment towards Kurdish asylum seekers was also reiterated by a respondent from the Refugee Advice Centre (John) who spoke of a lack of welcome on the part of Romantown's local Pakistani community towards Kurdish asylum seekers arriving in 'their' community:

Yeh obviously all I get is one side of the story but I have heard on several occasions that, shall we say, those from the subcontinent don't take too kindly, it's their turf, they have been there a long while, 50 years Although I have been to the mosque, I have not been when these things happen, erhm there is a bit of friction between the local Pakistani priest, imams and all that, and the guys from Iraq (Fieldwork interview, 8 November 2004)

When asked if this comment included the other resident populations, he commented that:

Not necessarily the Sikhs. Reports I have are mainly Pakistani, the strong Muslim community who take exception to the influx of Kurds. I think it's a misnomer that all Muslims are brothers together just like all Christians are brothers together, that's a misnomer too (Fieldwork interview, 8 November 2004)

As with the Pakistani community, it is the sheer size of Kurdish numbers and their propensity to remain invisible that in policy terms creates difficulties in determining community relations (discussed further in the next chapter). In Barthian terms it is also difficult to judge how established relationships are between these two large groups and it is doubtful whether contact at an informal level is maintained. Large Kurdish numbers have had the effect of allowing some protection from expressions of hostility but have also created strong possibilities for community tensions to erupt where the Kurds have gained in confidence. John also comments, that there have been splits within the Kurdish community and as yet the only visible venue that has remained as a Kurdish central meeting place is the Kurdish Café on Romantown Road (Fig 1). Other attempts at providing headquarters for the Kurdish community (even with support from the Refugee Advice Centre) have ended in failure. The Kurdish asylum seekers therefore do not create a visible presence from where they can be observed by the communities in Romantown. This is supported in Chapter Two where Bauman (1990) wrote that it is the observance and the ambiguity of the stranger's position that promotes the need to construct precise boundaries within a human constructed world which: 'send us an unmistakable signal as to what to expect' (Bauman, 1990, p55). As John observes, a community like the Kurds which remain invisible creates problems:

It's actually quite difficult to liaise with anybody in the Kurdish community because it has been quite fractured. Not aggressively fractured, but they seem to keep in their little like... of clans together..... (Fieldwork interview, 8 November 2004)

This propensity for the Kurdish asylum seekers to work in small groups was apparent at the asylum focus group meeting where all Kurdish respondents arrived together. Also, from what they said, there were implications of hostility and racism towards them from Muslim residents of which the Pakistani community is the largest, and no offers of help:

There are many problems, from other nationalities.....Some Muslims some of them you know they do not really want us in Romantown...something like that. He thinks there are some problems, in quiet places Sometimes something happens when you are walking at night sometimes You can't get work from the Pakistani people. There are difficulties here and there is racism (Asylum Seeker Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

There were also complaints from Nathaniel (a Cameroonian refugee) at the asylum seekers' focus group, about the lack of commitment from the legal profession and the quality of representation that asylum seekers generally were receiving, some of this criticism pointing directly to local Pakistani solicitors:

Most of the solicitors here are from Pakistan, we don't have them from Africa or Iraq, and these people do not have an interest in these cases and they are genuine cases, are being pushed aside and people don't care about that (Asylum Seeker Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

These examples provide more evidence of an unwillingness by the Pakistani community to liaise with the local Kurdish community and other asylum seekers for reasons already given.

This breaking down of communication could also become problematic with other large new groups coming into Romantown. Nathaniel raised the issue of a perceived new threat to refugee employment by EU workers coming to Romantown to work. This particular point was now being raised regularly at Refugee Forum meetings and Nathaniel commented on changes that were taking place:

Romantown is different two years back from what it is now. There are difficulties now of people getting jobs. There used to be jobs but now with people coming in from Europe, Latvia and other countries, people will do jobs for £4.00 and cheaper so the situation now means that so many people find it difficult to get a job and Romantown will go down because of this and it will increase the crime rate because people don't have money and other things (Asylum Seeker Focus Group interview, September, 2005)

These objections may be exacerbated further when newly acceded Albanians and Romanians are able to come to Romantown in 2007, and as more asylum seekers and EU workers arrive and more asylum seekers remain illegally, lack of employment may also become a highly contentious issue here.

It is the constant change of dynamics within Romantown that present ambivalence with regard to asylum seeker welcome. Established Sikh and Pakistani communities have maintained a public (and evidence of backstage) collaboration in community management (discussed here and further in the next chapter), but as a proportion of the Sikh community moves out, the character of Romantown becomes more singularly Pakistani and their relationship with the Kurdish community is more uncertain. Continued migrations of EU workers from Poland moving into the community also add to this community ambivalence, and the potential for misunderstanding of community dynamics and tensions rises.

Global complexity, religious essentialism, ambiguity and difference

There are also other aspects of global complexity that manifest themselves in the micro-world of Romantown, where unexpected anomalies in the form of ambiguous ethnic boundary markers can cause tensions. As already reported, the large Kurdish community in Romantown

are mainly Sunni Muslim who share their religion with the resident Pakistani community, although this does not seem to make a great deal of difference with regard to reception as already discussed. Within the Iranian community, whose numbers are far less than the Kurdish community in Romantown (250-400 as against c1500-2000), there are many who have fled the Islamic Republic of Iran for varying reasons ranging from political activity, to being homosexual, or belonging to a trade union (Independent Race and Refugee Network, March 2006). Among these, many have converted to Christianity to avoid what they saw as enforced Islamic fundamentalism in Iran (ibid). It is this group in particular, where boundaries become ambiguous in Romantown, where there is a predominance of Muslim groups. Members of the Persian Cultural Association (PCA) in Romantown, of which the largest percentage is Iranian, lean towards integration with the white community as Christians, and politically they share western ideological allegiances to the Shah who was deposed in 1979 prior to Iran becoming an Islamic Republic. The leader of the PCA, Mehran, expresses his interest to integrate into British culture and says:

I would like to say that the Iranian people are..... (Iran) was going to be a developed country, it was the beginning, the first step of capitalism in Iran during the King (Shah) and therefore there was lots of influence from the American culture, western culture in Europe and people were influenced by that culture and they became interested in modern life and westernize themselves so therefore they are very much interested in western peoples and modern life Iranian are much interested to integrate compared to other countries..... we want to mix with English people, to learn about their culture (Fieldwork interview, 26 January, 2005)

There is an irony here, in which Christian Iranians settling in Romantown wished to integrate with the white majority, but because of being geographically and demographically located here, tensions could erupt where they would be regarded as turncoats by the large and

dominant Pakistani Muslim minority. Thus locally their presence is perceived as ambiguous and tension could rise as a result. Sharon, the local media respondent had also heard of some tensions between Iranian convert asylum seekers and others:

I know that there are you know possibly some tensions between people from different faiths and I know that some of the Iranian asylum seekers, have because of the fact that they have converted, have told me that they have experienced some extreme, been in some difficult situations (Fieldwork interview, 18 February, 2005)

For John, a committed Christian, who works locally for *Youth with a Mission*, there also seems to be a certain amount of ambiguity from Christian organisations towards this particular Iranian group, and he commented on the validity of these conversions:

There are quite a group of asylum seekers, it wouldn't be in their interest to name any of them because erhm, nominally they are Muslims, but have some sort of revelation of Jesus should we say, in other words a conversion to Christianity and are now members of churches, part of churches. Erhm initially there was scepticism about this because it was thought they were just to improve their chances of getting asylum, but there seems to be some substance to their claims regarding their conversion and they have talked out some pretty tough situations, notably folks from Iran and Afghanistan (Fieldwork interview, 8 November, 2004)

There is also a common strand however, in that many of these Iranians are Kurdish, and their cultural heritage rather than their religious conviction may help to classify them. Thus the position of the Christian Iranian becomes less pervasive within the Kurdish communities of Romantown where they all speak Kurdish languages. Like the existing Sikh and Pakistani residents, who are both Punjabi and speak Punjabi, it is culture that creates connections and a healthy coexistence exists between groups in this way (Jenkins, 2003, Barth, 1969). Mehran's

organisation also helps Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers as their own association is not established sufficiently to help. As he says about his organisation:

We have members from Iraq who speak Kurdish, we have members from Turkey, we have members from Afghanistan, we have less problem because we have the same language.....There are Kurdish and Turkish peoples sent to us because the Kurdish community hasn't been formed properly and they come to us....We look after asylum seekers and refugees but that they are not doing any political activities and not religious, but we have many members who are Christian, who have converted to Christianity, we have members who are Muslim, we have members from other religions (Fieldwork interview, 26 January, 2005)

There has been a split within the local Iranian population where the more traditional Farsi element has branched away from the more western looking PCA. Differences between these two Iranian groups have settled now but when Mehran was asked how his community connected with the resident Pakistani community, his community had received no help:

No we have not had this much help from them. Nothing at all, zero, zero, under zero. Because they are usually, their business. And in a way, some of them don't like us because they think Iran is a good government and we have escaped from that country and claimed asylum, it means we are bad people because we are against that government (Fieldwork interview, 26 January, 2005)

Here it could have been the Christian element plus their leanings towards western capitalism and away from Islamic fundamentalism that created the conflict with local Pakistanis, who may admit to religious similarities with Iraqi Kurds, although evidence substantiates no particular connection there either. For the large numbers of Pakistani residents in Romantown who predominantly marry first cousins, cultural demarcations are very fine indeed, and this

reflects increasingly on their relationships with any other ethnic group, new or old, that lives within the boundaries of Romantown.

To finalise this last section of the chapter, research findings examine Romantown in terms of change and a re-examination of community dynamics and boundary maintenance as some older community residents move out and asylum seekers move in. It begins by examining how community changed for some white residents who remained behind after white migrations to other parts of the city. Sandra Wallman provided assistance here where she asked: 'what differences of context account for marked contrasts in ethnic relations within the same inner city?' (Wallman, 1988, p235). She attributed differences in Battersea and Bow to differing dynamics in that one was expansionist and the other insular in its outlook. These white residents both live or had lived in Romantown. Alice, however, felt no affiliation to white communities outside Romantown and embraced multiculturalism whilst Aiyesha's aunt hated it. Perhaps one had found community where the other had lost it. Members of the Sikh community were also leaving as their financial situations improved and Sima suggested that younger Sikhs wanted to leave the stigma of Romantown behind them. As one half of the old allegiant communities moved away, the less expansive Pakistani community was left behind to present a welcome to new dispersals of asylum seekers. In Barthian terms, it was the notion of the pariah that was raised here in which Nasir felt that his Pakistani community was being stigmatised and they were not able to or did not wish to move out as their Sikhs neighbours had done (Barth, 1969). As far as boundary demarcation was concerned, fear of arbitrariness from outside compounded an overt conformity within the Pakistani community, added by their tendencies towards endogamy which isolated the community both within and outside Romantown further. In policy terms, the Pakistani community was harder to reach than the more expansive Sikh community, so community relations potentially could be more difficult

to read. There was also some concern that as fear of terrorist activity rose, relationships between these two large communities were breaking down.

It was also apparent that friendships and offers of help by the Pakistani community toward Kurdish asylum seekers were quite rare. The basis for connection that had existed between Sikh and Pakistani residents was not there, although both Pakistanis and Kurds were Sunni Muslim. From a Pakistani perspective, the overt conformity was to culture which they still shared with the Sikh residents, rather than religion. There were also problems in that initially the Kurdish asylum seekers did not maintain a subordinate position within the Romantown hierarchy and this inflamed both the Sikh and Pakistani residents. Mr Singh was vocal about initial problems with Kurdish asylum seekers and it was obvious from his comments that there was a need for dialogue to establish codes of behaviour. Elements of conviviality discussed in the first section, seemed to present difficulties in the final section. An incidence where Ahmed met Pakistani elders at a local mosque showed him not to be welcome, although Nasir excused this opposition as being directed towards youth generally by the elders. John, from the Refugee Advice Centre, compounded fears however that the Pakistani community did not want the Kurdish communities in Romantown. This disinclination to mix by the Pakistani community, plus the Kurdish unwillingness to form a community group, resulted in ambiguities on both sides. This, in Barthian terms meant that the ebb and flow to remove these ambiguities and allay any tensions was going to be difficult to achieve. There were also other fears by refugees that large numbers of EU migrants were removing employment opportunities for themselves which also sought to compromise social cohesion in Romantown.

There were also surprises when community dynamics were misread by incoming asylum seekers from Iran, who veered towards western capitalism and were Christian. They expected acceptance from a British public but were strongly rejected by local Pakistani Muslims in Romantown who saw them as opponents to the Muslim government in Iran. Thus community specific concepts of difference and identity created unexpected tensions where boundaries were unclear locally (Hall, 1997, Douglas, 1966).

Conclusion: partial integration, partial segregation

Reflecting the challenges of the concept of community (as discussed in Chapter Two), the fieldwork data has shown how the sense of ‘community’ which extends a welcome to new groups of asylum seekers in Romantown is easier to discern in the first main section of this chapter and demonstrates the potential to create tension points in the last.

Romantown itself is an established multicultural area and there have been immigrant populations living here for over 55 years. If you take account of the Irish immigration, then this extends to 150 years (Hawkins and Fox, 2004). The first section of this chapter dealt with its evolution from a white inner city area to an ethnically diverse one. Common geographical origins of immigrants and racial tensions and urban unrest of the 1970s and 80s, has created allegiances between ethnic and white groups, and ‘community’ within Romantown has been built on trust during unsettled times. These feelings of trust and community have also been acknowledged by new residents and perhaps to a lesser extent through the eyes of the new asylum groups dispersed here from 2001 onwards. There are incidences of strong friendships

between predominant residents and asylum seekers, but these incidences are still relatively rare and social contact and integration has been mainly through formal processes and contact, although gender may play a role here as informal contact was spoken of by female respondents.

The influence of the national media on asylum has had little impact on the large segregated Pakistani community of Romantown, and the main impact on local attitudes to asylum seekers were shaped around local issues. A policy decision to remove a local surgery from residents for asylum seeker use ended in residents' complaints being reported copiously in the local newspaper although its actual impact on local residents was debateable. The main complaint towards asylum seekers by Sikh and Pakistani residents was a cultural one targeted towards young Kurdish males who acted irresponsibly.

As local residents move away from Romantown, dynamics change as other less expansive elements remain and new groups arrive. In Barthian terms, strong community boundaries were seen to exist in the first section, but inter-ethnic communication was taking place. However in the last section, community relations between the Pakistani and Kurdish communities in policy terms were becoming more difficult to read. Although it became clear that expected help from Muslim residents toward Muslim asylum seekers was not forthcoming, the sense of community in Romantown remains as a protective corner within a potentially hostile climate to resident Pakistanis and new dispersals of asylum seekers. However, this does not necessarily temper feelings of isolation for asylum seekers who have to rely on their own networks rather than help from the Pakistani and other communities. The Pakistani community has turned Romantown into (as John referred to it) 'their patch' and they are reluctant to share

it with their Kurdish neighbours. Their objections however, remain underground as tensions between these two groups remain purposefully clouded. As Nasir observed:

English people, black people, Asians, Kurds, foreigners, come to my shop, they respect each other. Honestly, we get on great. In Romantown the communities get on very well. Whether there is tension underneath I don't know (Fieldwork interview, 27 February, 2005)

Although Nasir is a great ambassador for Romantown, he alludes to the possibility of tension that accompanies its ethnic diversity which in policy terms would prove to be problematic. However, notions of 'community' in its many forms may provide the panacea which in turn transcends risks to social cohesion and diffuses local opposition to asylum settlement in Romantown. The chapter has demonstrated examples of acceptance and rejection by residents and a certain amount of uncertainty by asylum seekers as to the type of welcome they receive here. The meaning and retention of community however is very important to a majority of the residents that I spoke with. What began to emerge in the discussions throughout this chapter was the key role of social, cultural and managing agencies from the statutory, voluntary and refugee sectors in constructing and building notions of a local community in Romantown, but this could not be accomplished without committed resident co-operation. The next chapter seeks to examine this combined role in the maintenance of 'community' in Romantown and the dispersal process.

Chapter 6

Agencies, asylum seekers and the community:

The different perspectives of successful local governance

Introduction

This chapter forms the second of the two empirical responses. Again it will attempt to ground theoretical and policy arguments approached in Chapters One, Two and Three. With the presentation of analysis of resultant fieldwork data and in line with the main research question on the quality of Romantown as a dispersal area, this chapter complements Chapter Five by continuing to present an accurate reading of events. However, the focus here is on governance and management rather than resident asylum group dynamics. The chapter examines the level of involvement, interaction and influence of the statutory and voluntary sectors, the local faith communities and the refugee and asylum community organisations (RCOs) and analyzes the effectiveness of dispersal management in Romantown.

Governance, together with multicultural and community, forms the key concepts of this thesis, and it is governance that is the main driver for this chapter. In preparation, theoretical ideas were presented by both Michel Foucault and Susan Wright in Chapter Two to support empirical findings here. Foucault's writings were used to observe the participatory and often resistant actions used by agencies; and Wright's to measure the potential levels of competent action displayed by these agencies. Through more recent policy processes of devolvement and historically via local community and voluntary sector involvement, agencies at all levels have become active in dispersal in Romantown. Thus devolved management of resources and local issues, bottom up regulation and management, and 'outsiders' coming into the political and

policy processes all form part of these complex actions of dispersal management and governance that will be examined here.

To prepare for theoretical discussions within this more devolved policy terrain, Chapter One and this chapter present recent policy directives on cohesion and integration which have resulted in changes to the organisational landscape of the public sector. These directives have had the effect of decentralising and devolving decision making processes to the local in which the onus now falls on local government to access and manage its local communities through the implementation of more devolved and consultative community structures of governance (Department of Communities and Local Government, 2006). As Janet Newman concluded: ‘the local’ is increasingly a site to which formerly central functions are devolved, fragmenting a (supposedly) unitary public in the name of flexibility, responsiveness and other goals’ (Newman, 2007, p15). She continued by highlighting more participatory actions by public institutions which result in ‘new forms of alliance between academic, activists and policy actors’ where less powerful organisations are able to mobilise themselves through these increasingly consultative devolved public spheres (ibid, p16). For the purposes of this thesis, this political shift towards the devolved management of multicultural and the ‘inviting in’ of organisations and key local individuals (community champions), results in increased public action within this local and more devolved and consultative public sphere of governance. Potentially, this means that dispersal management in Romantown becomes less hierarchal and more inclusive as a result. However, this type of collective thinking does not always flow easily, where government is trying to promote participatory action on the one hand, yet achieve its own socio political objectives, which in this case is dispersal management, on the other. Also in the light of this new approach, some communities and organisations are able to achieve a level of competence where they are able to act effectively in opposition to the

desires of public institutions in pursuit of their own rights and interests (Wright, 1994). As Newman observed: ‘marginalized or politically less powerful publics are more likely to be mobilized, and their voices heard, through autonomously organized groups than through ‘official’ forms of consultation and participation established by governmental bodies’ (Newman, 2007, p16). It is the productive and management elements of community governance with regard to dispersal in Romantown, in the light of these new organisational elements within an increasingly devolved sphere, that are discussed here and throughout this chapter.

Within an arena of tense, complex and often chaotic dispersal management, Michel Foucault provided us, as Chapter Two argued, with the tools to observe and discuss the repressive and productive forms of power acted out by the statutory sectors and the politically less powerful community and its associated voluntary organisations in pursuit of their collective goal (good dispersal management). To complement Foucault, Susan Wright enabled us to observe the increasingly competent ways in which local agencies and clients from all sectors seek to manoeuvre themselves through bureaucratic systems and work with and challenge the forces that seek to control them in pursuit of a range of resources, local issues, rights and interests.

Foucault’s regard for power, as having a repressive and productive function, removes us from the essentialist/reductionist views where power remains fixed within a hierarchical structure and power flows from the top down (Carter, 1997, Foucault, 1980f). Examples of more participatory moves by government can be observed in Chapter One where community integration and cohesion and accessing hard to reach citizens become the new policy foci (CIC, 2007). Similarly, in Chapter Two, Miller and Rose provide examples of less hierarchical

and repressive actions by government agencies at the Tavistock Clinic (Miller and Rose, 2001/1988, Foucault, 1979).

However, central (NASS) and local government still have to achieve their socio political objectives, which are management of asylum dispersal, but within this more devolved public sphere, communities, voluntary agencies and asylum seekers will also be able to engage in the pursuit of their own rights and interests. Foucault's writings supported this thinking again. In Chapter Two I presented Bob Carter's analysis on Foucauldian discussions on power which dispute it as: 'held by somebody and denied to others' and regards its determination as 'locked in a symbiotic relationship of power and resistance' for a power that is omnipresent and 'a machinery that no-one owns', therefore free to be negotiated for (Carter, 1997, p132, Foucault, 1980f, p156). Carter discussed Foucault's reference to an agonistic relationship of power and resistance where: 'power operates to overcome resistance whilst resistance prompts a more intense exercise of power' in return (ibid). These tensions ensue therefore when local government imposes its prime directive which is to manage dispersal locally and access hard to reach groups, and the powerful voluntary sectors in Romantown resist in a variety of ways (as presented here) when they consider local and central government to be failing in their duty of care.

It is these persisting co-operative and difficult relationships between managing agencies, voluntary agencies and RCOs in Romantown within this more devolved sphere of governance that has encouraged statutory sectors to attempt to be more participatory, and elevated statuses of marginalised groups to a new level, that is examined in this chapter. Added to this are established modes of competent action by existing immigrant residents in which there has evolved an expectation of resistance to statutory sector directives locally. It is the quality of

this resistance that is also flagged up for discussion throughout this chapter and is supported by Susan Wright's observations also introduced in Chapter Two (Wright, 1994).

Wright concentrated on clients and empowerment and observed the increasing complexity of bureaucratic systems where people's welfare problems rarely fall within the remit of one particular organisation, and 'different 'bits' of a person are relevant in different ways to different organizations, thus fragmenting the person' (ibid, p161). As Chapter Two outlined, due to these increasing levels of complexity, she quoted the findings of sociological and anthropological studies by Tapp and Levine (1977) where attempts were made to classify two modes of action in which cliental behaviour falls into two distinct categories; competence and compliance. Competence exemplifies clients' ability 'to understand the bureaucratic system and activate it in an appropriate way in pursuit of their rights and interests. Compliance (on the other hand), refers to a passive acceptance of the behaviour required by the organization' (ibid, p161). Thus for purposes of analysis, Wright's thinking was used to determine which of the two categories above, agency/cliental action in dispersal management Romantown would fall into. Within this devolved terrain of local governance, Foucault and Wright form the main theoretical insight in this chapter.

To understand how policy has manifested itself at a local level, the chapter will now briefly revisit Chapter Three in which changes to the organisational structure of the public sector and a range of policy measures brought in by the current government have sought to increasingly devolve the decision making process towards communities (Department of Communities and Local Government, 2006). There will also be an introduction to the multi-agency management strategies that have evolved within Romantown at this point, and the effects that these policies have had locally. Allusions will be made throughout the chapter to co-operative but also

difficult aspects of agency working and the levels of competent community engagement that promotes an understanding of the bureaucratic system by communities, as opposed to passive acceptance of the behaviour required by managing agencies (Wright, 1994).

In the chapter's main section, investigations will focus on how management proceeds on difficult issues surrounding asylum integration from all agencies involved. Initially, this section will concentrate on the more co-operative aspects of agency interaction and how negotiations on dispersal are facilitated using the influence diagram as a guide (Fig 2 situated at the end of this chapter). However, the end of this section will focus on Refugee Community Organisation (RCO) capabilities, generally and locally in Romantown, and difficulties experienced in becoming part of formalised management integration strategies. Empirically, as with Chapter Five, discussion will be driven by data from interviews, focus groups, plus references to issues raised at bi-monthly voluntary refugee forum and some statutory forum meetings.

The final section will focus on the more negative aspects of dispersal and will be more narrative in structure, based mainly on observation notes from within the Refugee Advice Centre. Here the aim is to reflect on the difficulties and challenges of dispersal from the perspective of this frontline agency and its client base. Vignettes from my fieldwork diary and Refugee Forum minutes will link in here to substantiate findings on inter agency conflicts and the workings of the Kurdish network as a support mechanism.

The chapter will conclude with discussions surrounding the measurement of successful dispersal in situations where destitution, lack of funding and perceived racism could have created divisions between the statutory, voluntary, refugee, asylum and faith community

sectors. In what could be perceived as a fairly ambiguous environment for settlement however, I hope to show that successful dispersal does not always rely on co-operative management, well funded agencies and welcoming communities. Settlement can also be enabled by a variety of measures where competent community and agency action creates a situation where official and unofficial networks coexist within this process of governance in Romantown.

Policy drives towards inclusion

This section begins with a brief reflection on recent policy measures that focus on the removal of disadvantage within the ethnically diverse inner city, with moves towards integration and community cohesion, and a managed migration of ‘new minorities’ of which asylum seekers and EU migrant workers form a part (Flynn, 2005, ODPM, 2004). The aim here is to establish how this shift of emphasis, towards integration and cohesion, manifests and adapts itself at a local level to the needs of asylum seekers settling in Romantown.

In the wake of riots in northern cities in 2001, it has been a commitment by the current New Labour government as part of its urban regeneration agenda, to address issues regarding urban decay and the segregation and marginalisation of BME groups within UK inner cities (ODPM, 2004, 2003). The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now disbanded) entered the community cohesion agenda by promoting ‘stock investment’ within the ethnically diverse inner city, to inject feelings of commercial wealth into what locally may be perceived as tired social and private housing stock and general lack of investment (DCLG, 2006, ODPM, 2005, 2004, 2003). In August 2006, Ruth Kelly, the (then) minister in charge of the Department for

Communities and Local Government, introduced the department's community cohesion agenda and the launch of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion (CIC, 2007). The aim was not only to promote immigration as a boost to the UK economy, but to also encourage integration and cohesion within diverse inner city areas that were demographically changing as new migrants arrived (BBC News, 8 August, 2006). An Interim Statement from the CIC, suggested the importance of supporting migrants to improve their English language skills and warned that a lack of social interaction can lead to parochialism and ignorance (CIC, 2007). Policy agendas on immigration and housing both encompass community cohesion and seek to instil confidence in the ethnically diverse inner city and promote ethnic integration following the riots in Bradford, Oldham and Burnley and places where anti Muslim sentiment has intensified post 7/7 and 21/7 (DCLG, 2006, Cantle et al, 2004). The Local Government White Paper entitled *Strong and Prosperous Communities*, introduced by the Department for Communities and Local Government, also became part of these policy drives. Governance thus becomes increasingly devolved to local authorities who are encouraged to address issues surrounding local identities and access to 'hard to reach' groups and communities and work with the CIC to achieve this (DCLG, 2006).

This present trend in policy ties in with current research being carried out by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation entitled *Community engagement in governance in dynamic and diverse neighbourhoods* (which forms part of their three year immigration and integration programme), a report on which is due at the end of 2007 (JRF, 2007). The dispersal of asylum seekers to ethnically diverse communities means that new immigrant groups are also becoming part of these community engagement and cohesion strategies (Flynn, 2003). Their numbers and diversity have resulted in the rise of Refugee Community Organisations (RCOs) (Zetter et al, 2005) which become a part of community/client regulation and management in

which they expedite the settlement and integration of refugees and asylum seekers. Through RCO membership, asylum seekers and refugees also become part of the more formal organisational structures already in place, and form part of the filter process that feeds into and out of local government in this way (the role of the RCO is discussed further later in the chapter).

Accessing hard to reach groups has increased in momentum as a government policy priority in the wake of anti Muslim terror threats since 9/11, 7/7 (plus recently suspected terrorist plots at Heathrow and Forest Gate), and political and media criticism directed towards migration mismanagement and over staying asylum seekers. As a result of reports written by Ted Cantle et al and Herman Ousely on the dangers of segregation within communities, there have been policy shifts away from celebrating diversity, towards social cohesion and integration aimed specifically at Muslims. Here young Muslims, and Muslim women in particular, are targeted for support to encourage engagement with civic society (which is also echoed in the CIC Interim Report) (CIC, 2007, HO, 2005, Cantle et al, 2004, Ousely, 2001, Parekh, 2000). Proposals focus on how the statutory agencies, particularly the police, together with the Commission for Racial Equality, can work with local Pakistani communities to instil counter terrorist sentiments, where the mosque, instead of being the conduit for terrorism, becomes the hub for new ideas and community services (HO, 2005, Ousely, 2001).

These combined policy initiatives seek to integrate rather than alienate localities like Romantown, and it is within this policy makers' Petri dish that asylum seekers are also managed. As faith communities became the target of government initiatives to encourage them towards civic engagement with the statutory agencies rather than restrict themselves within faith activity, refugees and asylum seekers who arrive in sufficient numbers here are also

encouraged to form their own associations, and become part of this integration process (Lowndes and Chapman, 2005, Zetter et al, 2005). As Roger Zetter et al observes, it is this ability to organise themselves that has produced an understanding by government, that RCOs are in a better position to manage those dispersed, especially in the early stages of settlement (Zetter et al, 2005). The development of these organisations needs to be encouraged therefore, in order that dialogue can exist between agencies, and inclusion of new groups can be maintained (ibid). This is not a new policy, as Zetter, then a Home Office researcher speaking at the BSA annual conference ten years ago, noted the importance of the RCOs in the dialogue process with agencies, and used a quote from Duke to do so:

‘Their mediating role cannot be overstated, especially given the language problems that most new arrivals have. It is much easier for them to make contact with their community groups whose members speak their own language than it is for them to contact British agencies directly’ (ibid, Duke, 1996, p9)

However, there are questions as to how effective agencies are at negotiating with community representatives, when effectiveness is gauged by the representatives’ ability at cascading information back to ‘their’ communities. Zetter et al write on the ‘imagined’ impact of migrant mobilisation by both the state and minority ethnic leadership (Zetter et al, 2005, Anderson, 1983). He quotes Werbner and Anwar, who: ‘in their analysis of black and minority ethnic leadership in Britain argued that minority ethnic communities are ‘imagined’ in Anderson’s (1983) sense, both by the state, “in order to control or allocate resources in an ‘equitable’ manner”, and by minority ethnic leaderships “who claim to represent them”’ (Zetter et al, 2005, p22, Werbner and Anwar, 1991, p21). Also, from a purely practical viewpoint, divisions within RCOs have led to two or sometimes three new RCOs forming from the seminal

association or group, creating and becoming part of complex organisational landscapes in its competition over resources. So questions could be asked as to how far the statutory sector is able to include and is willing to support these new groups that are emerging. The community cohesion agenda places emphasis on minority and migrant communities not majority ones. Asylum seekers are a particularly marginalised group and capacity building for them becomes a difficult issue in which they have little control over their own dispersal and settlement (currently managed by NASS); they are not allowed to work; their membership is not static; and their community membership may include overstayers that agency support cannot cater for.

To bring these policy initiatives into context, the next section presents a brief picture of governance and asylum within Romantown with the assistance of recent local mappings of the area and the influence diagram (Fig 2). The aim is to show the organisational landscape in Romantown, its complexity, and the connections between the different organisations and sections. To initiate some measure of successful dispersal within this agency landscape, ideas on competence and compliance of communities; the nature and demarcation of boundaries that surround agencies; the mechanics of power negotiations that filter through these agencies; and the levels of participatory actions by the statutory sectors; will also be woven into this section and throughout the chapter (Carter, 1997, Wright, 1994, Foucault, 1980f, Arnstein, 1969, Barth, 1969).

Multi-agency management of asylum in Romantown

The influence diagram (Fig 2) located at the end of this chapter, suggests that the organisational landscape of governance in Romantown is extensive and very complex. To facilitate an understanding of its complexity and also to translate some of the policy initiatives above into the locality, I also intend to use existing mapping procedures instigated by local agencies, to exhibit how agencies interact with each other across the divides between the statutory, voluntary and refugee sectors. That continual mappings by statutory authorities (together with voluntary agencies) occur, also reveals the competent and dynamic nature of this organisational terrain (Wright, 1994), and the possibilities for participatory action and shared knowledge locally (Miller and Rose, 2001, Carter, 1997, Foucault, 1980f). Fig 2 aids in the support of this view in which many agencies from all sectors are observed as connecting with each other across traditional agency divides of the statutory, voluntary and refugee sectors. Although interaction seems busy and energetic, as observed later in the chapter, there were co-operative but often extremely difficult relationships existing across this agency terrain, where strategies were being exerted by residents, voluntary/refugee organisations and faith communities, against the statutory and other agencies, in pursuit of their own interests.

Regional consortia and the local statutory multi-agency forum

Gersh Subhra's report entitled 'Refugee Needs and Gaps in Services', funded by Refugee Action and Denton Millennium Network, provides a comprehensive picture of what was in place in 2001 when multi-agency consortia were being formed to support asylum dispersal in the region (in adherence with Audit Commission recommendations) (Robinson et al, 2003, Subhra, 2002, Audit Commission 2000c). The *local* Asylum Seeker Multi Agency Forum (ASMAF) created to service Romantown, mirrored regional consortia, and was comprised of a

collaboration of Denton City Council, the NHS, post 16 Education sector, the Police, Refugee Housing, Refugee Action, voluntary and refugee support organisations, regional representation from EMCARS and nationally from NASS (Subhra, 2002).

Within the local council, overall responsibility for asylum seeker agency liaison lay with Housing Options, as historically they had been involved in co-ordinating housing for the city's Kosovan programme 1999/2000 in the city. The key person here was the Asylum Seeker Project Officer (ASPO) who was also an interview respondent (her role is explored further in the next section) (Fox, 2006). Other partnerships were in existence at that time, for example, local legal service partnerships through which legal advice and information on the implications of statutory change could be shared between agencies. Although ASMAF was statutory led, it was attended by the voluntary sector, but RCOs did not attend these meetings (although invited), and there were later suggestions that they should although, to date, this has not materialised (ASMAF, 2005). Jacky, the ASPO mentioned above, now makes concerted efforts to access RCOs via the voluntary Refugee Forum, and discussions to facilitate this are currently in progress (Denton Refugee Forum, July, 2007). It is interesting to note here how the onus of information sharing on refugee and asylum issues in Romantown should shift from the statutory to the voluntary forum in order to gain access. Also that the voluntary rather than the statutory refugee forum became the main conduit for inter agency discussion on asylum. Community safety partnerships (CSPs) however, have their own direct means of access with faith, refugee and asylum communities, through which direct intervention by CSPs helped quell tensions between the Pakistani and Kurdish communities in Romantown (Hughes, 2007), so statutory sectors were also actively engaged in the pursuit of policy directed goals of access and monitoring community relations.

Multi-ethnic group dialogue already existed in Romantown via the Minority Ethnic Community Advisory Committee (MECAC), organised by Denton City Council. This committee, chaired by the deputy leader of the city council, provided a public meeting space for a limited number of representatives of local ethnic minorities including RCOs (Fox, 2006). Originally six delegates from both the Indian and Pakistani communities, and four members from the African Caribbean communities, were invited to attend MECAC meetings, together with members of the police and, on occasion, a member from Denton Racial Equality Council. Also, members from predominant asylum and refugee groups were invited to attend. Although this was a public meeting, only those invited were allowed to speak. It was at this venue where dialogue took place between Pakistani, Sikh and Kurdish representatives when tensions arose early in asylum dispersal (although as noted, work was also done by local CSPs). However, more recently, when tensions arose with local Afghanis and resident groups of Pakistanis and Sikhs, the Refugee Housing representative (himself a Pakistani Muslim) acted as mediator, although city council employees have also been involved with capacity building between Kurdish and Pakistani communities. In practical terms, this means that other areas of mediation are available (again refer to Fig 2).

From a statutory perspective, it is the Asylum Seeker Project Officer who has been a key figure in the management of ASMAF (the statutory refugee forum) which reconvened in November 2005, prior to the recommencement of dispersal to Romantown in February 2006. Her general function was more of an agency liaison role rather than a contact person, for faith, refugee and asylum communities (whom she would redirect to the relevant agencies within the voluntary sector). However access for her is becoming a priority in the wake of recent policy initiatives, and she regularly attends the voluntary Refugee Forum, as discussed, where she is able to physically access RCO representatives. Her role is explored further in the next section.

Voluntary refugee forum

The voluntary Denton Refugee Forum was convened in 2002, at a similar juncture or slightly before ASMAF. After initial disagreements between community agencies as to how and through what the forum should operate, its present form resulted from representation by the Denton Aid for Kosovo group, all of whom worked with the Refugee Advice Centre and forum later. The forum was designed for and, to an extent, organised by refugees and asylum seekers, and is now housed within the Bosnian Centre (from where the Refugee Advice Centre operates and from where I carried out my observation). Refugee Action usually play a dominant role in refugee forums in other cities, but Denton has always suffered from a lack of Refugee Action provision because of its size and comparatively low asylum numbers (although, as discussed in Chapter Five, the accuracy of these numbers is questionable). When it was realised that there was to be no permanent Refugee Action presence in Denton, the Refugee Advice Centre convened in 2003 through pressure for more service provision by the managers of the local Law Centre (who were finding it difficult to deal with a constant stream of non-legal requests for help), the Racial Equality Council, and the local Diocesan Council for Social Responsibility. The Refugee Forum then became linked to the Refugee Advice Centre.

Membership of the Refugee Forum *also* comes from both statutory and voluntary sectors but with additional membership from the Churches. Voluntary and statutory sector schemes and programmes such as Sure Start, New Deal, NIACE, Refugee Housing, Refugee Action, Phoenix, Fern, Livelihood and Support into Work, are all represented at Refugee Forum meetings. Statutory agency attendance comes from the local council, police, NHS, and regional attendance from EMCARS. A cross section of Refugee Community Organisations (RCOs) from Iran, Iraq, Sudan, Somalia, Congo, Bosnia, Kosovo/Albania, Zimbabwe,

Cameroon and Afghanistan also has the potential to attend. Other smaller groups from countries such as Algeria, Angola, Armenia, Burundi, China, Kenya, Macedonia, Mongolia, Palestine, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Turkey and Uganda can attend with or without RCO representation (Fox, 2006). Some larger RCOs, like the Congo Support Group and Persian Cultural Association, will also help smaller groups when they have no formal representation (see Chapter Five). The main ethos of the Refugee Forum is that it is organised by RCOs for their benefit, so there is an expectation that they should attend. The Refugee Forum itself has a large membership of around 50 people (although attendance has been low recently from the RCO sector), and reports are presented at these meetings by a cross section of the membership. The present Chair, Greg, is an ex director of the local Racial Equality Council and one of the initial founders of the forum. He is also Director of the newly formed Eastern Migrants Association.

Forum meetings are always held bi-monthly at the Bosnian Centre building where the Refugee Advice Centre operates from. There are opportunities for RCOs to liaise with the managing agencies and vice versa, and the Forum often becomes a place where new RCO leaders introduce themselves. Some RCO leaders attend more regularly than others. Much has been done to encourage representation from the Kurdish community because of their predominance in Romantown and initial tensions with residents. As yet, however, a representative RCO has not formed properly, although the Kurdish leader, Arif, has attended meetings in the past. Occasionally there are splits within RCOs and new associations form, but all representatives have managed to share the table at Forum meetings which showed an initial level of commitment by the RCO sector (Denton Refugee Forum, 2006, 2005).

Evolution of localised management strategies

Initial analysis of multi-agency management in Romantown shows the two multi-agency forums, from both the statutory and voluntary sectors, working in tandem (Fig 2). Faith community leaders do not attend ASMAF or Refugee Forum meetings, and RCOs do not attend ASMAF, as previously discussed. Fox, in her mapping of refugee and asylum seekers services for Refugee Action and Refugee Housing, also observed that initially Denton was not as involved with local council regional consortium to the extent of other sister cities in the region (Fox, 2006). Where regional management forms the channelling point with central government on the asylum seeker programme nationally, Denton remains more isolated from regional and national policy and strategies in this respect (ibid). There is a regional consortium presence at the voluntary Refugee Forum and ASMAF meetings, but NASS only attends ASMAF, which results in a clearer top down approach at ASMAF. Exclusionary action by central government exacerbated Denton's isolation further where, as part of the New Model for National Refugee Integration (Home Office initiative), Denton should have qualified for a government representative. However, because of representation in the region's two sister cities, Romantown (via Denton) was not represented after all. The regional representative at the Refugee Forum meeting suggested that the city should have representation because of its potentially dense numbers of asylum seekers, and that central government should be pursued to achieve this (Denton Refugee Forum, January 2007).

The lack of Refugee Action presence in the city has catapulted the Refugee Advice Centre into prominence within voluntary sector management, through its links with the Refugee Forum. The Refugee Advice Centre has only recently applied for, and received charitable status and has, as yet, no regular funding source. Although indirect ad hoc funding may give the centre a certain amount of autonomy, in tandem with the Refugee Forum, it is always on the point of

bankruptcy (as discussed in the last section). However it could be argued here that through lack of a mainstream refugee agency, the management in Romantown, from both the statutory and voluntary sectors, is tailored more to local dispersal requirements (which empirical findings will corroborate), although the management picture appears rather chaotic and tentative as a result (Fig 2). These findings also substantiate observations where lack of appropriate mainstream support has generated increased involvement from the voluntary sectors which resist what they consider to be local and central government failure in their duty of care. Thus the prominence of the voluntary sector in Romantown again indicates the competence of governance structures here where there is clear understanding of the bureaucratic system and they are able to 'activate it in the pursuit of their rights and interests' (Wright, 1994, p161).

The prominence of the voluntary sector has resulted in an expanding refugee and asylum sector in Romantown and in the creation of numerous supportive charitable agencies, and further mappings have been performed to keep abreast of this constantly evolving support mechanism. These mappings have emanated from both the statutory and voluntary sectors (as discussed), being produced by the local council (Pearce, Pearce and Wynne), twice by Refugee Action (Subhra and Fox), and the local Racial Equality Council (Wojcik and Mieczyslaw), and appear to show a commitment to effective dispersal management (Fox, 2006, Wojcik and Mieczyslaw, 2006, Pearce, Pearce and Wynne, 2005, Subhra, 2002). One of the most recent mappings entitled: 'Filling the Gaps' produced by Sheila Fox funded by Refugee Action (with Refugee Housing), was also designed to identify any gaps in service provision and produce recommendations on how those gaps could be filled (Fox, 2006). Findings here (corroborated by Fig 2) were that services in Romantown were disparate and complex and that provision should be made for a 'one stop shop' organised primarily by

Refugee Action in tandem with other agencies. What effect this would have on the Refugee Advice Centre was not discussed, although subsequent Refugee Forum meetings have maintained that the position of the Refugee Advice Centre would not be compromised even with the addition of a Refugee Action presence in Romantown (now in place although only temporarily) (Denton Refugee Forum, January, 2007). The Refugee Advice Centre can and does cater for destitute asylum seekers and, as observed by the Asylum Seeker Project Officer (via ASMAF), is one of the few agencies legally able to do so in the city (ASMAF, 2005). Refugee Action (50% funded by the Home Office) is limited in doing this, although it has made recommendations that no asylum seekers should be forced into destitution in its latest report entitled *The Destitution Trap* (Refugee Action, 2006).

Another finding, by Fox, was that there had also been a push by RCOs to form their own forum where managing agencies from the statutory and voluntary sectors would only be invited when required (Fox, 2006). RCO leaders pushed for more autonomy on issues like Refugee Week for example, where they felt there was too much city council control and not enough input from themselves (Denton Refugee Forum, September, 2006). There are now nineteen RCOs in the city and many have been in operation for between 2-4 years (Fox, 2006), with the most recent coming from the Sudanese and Zimbabwean communities (ibid). Again, it is a feature of this community that these small, poorly funded organisations were able to organise themselves with support from the local council, voluntary Refugee Forum, Refugee Advice Centre and other charities. However, lack of sustained support by local government and other sources resulted in RCO withdrawal from the public forum. Although this would indicate a lack of infrastructural competence on their part (alluded to by Zetter et al) (2005), it also displayed an understanding of the bureaucratic system where they were only prepared to

negotiate with management agencies whilst support was given, and when this was withdrawn, they no longer co-operated (Wright, 1994).

Of equal importance are the extensive informal faith and ethnic group networks that are able to support members of their own national groups (discussed further in the next section), which again fulfil recommendations by the Audit Commission (Zetter et al, 2005, Robinson et al, 2003, Audit Commission, 2000c). Migration continues in Romantown with an approximate number of 3000 migrant workers arriving from Poland. Greg, the present Chair of the Refugee Forum (himself second generation Polish), helped to create a new association for this particular group and is now their director (as discussed), thus new community group associations emerge.

Romantown is an ethnically diverse community in constant flux from a migratory viewpoint but, also as noted, is a community that has been bypassed by the larger statutory and voluntary sector refugee agencies. This has resulted in uneasy partnerships being formed between the statutory and voluntary sectors. Jacky, the Asylum Seeker Project Officer (council), in collaboration with Greg the Chair of the (voluntary) Refugee Forum, have become key personnel in ensuring a continued council presence at Refugee Forum meetings, plus a refugee sector presence at Statutory Multi Agency Forum meetings albeit without RCO representation. Community participation is also a focus of attention from Denton University which seeks to take an active role locally and provides student placements in the many voluntary sector projects in existence in Romantown. The university has also been responsible for a growing amount of local research (Subhra, 2002). Dr Buller, the programme leader, encourages refugee and asylum seekers (if possible) to become part of this programme, a role discussed further in the next section. Other academic endeavours have included collaborations with local city

partnerships to facilitate the formation of a Forum of Faiths that aims towards greater involvement by faith communities in city life generally (Weller and Wolfe, 2003). Also, the Multifaith Centre, originally linked to Denton University and funded by the Lotteries Commission, continues to reach out into Romantown and encourage interfaith dialogue, through seminars, exhibitions and events (again further discussed in the next section).

So, in line with research questions on the extent to which agencies had engaged with the governance of dispersal management and asylum seeker integration in Romantown, my main research findings from this section were that policy drives towards the devolution of governance had the effect of creating a more locally responsive management structure. An effect of this was a shift of multi-agency discussions on refugee and asylum management from the statutory to the voluntary sector in which the voluntary Refugee Forum had evolved into an effective conduit for discussion on dispersal management (although the statutory agencies intervened in other ways on matters of community cohesion to ensure that contact was maintained between asylum seekers and faith communities). The Refugee Forum thus provided a source of shared knowledge for agencies and clients to feed into, and agencies (statutory and voluntary) through attendance, became more participatory in their acquisition of this knowledge. Wright and Foucault's writings that I presented in Chapter Two continued to support observations on a less repressive and more participatory distribution of power and acquisition of knowledge through these modes of action (Miller and Rose, 2001/1988, Carter, 1997, Foucault, 1980f), and the voluntary sectors in Romantown exhibited competence through their ability to acquire a strong community presence within the dispersal landscape (Wright, 1994). However, despite this strong presence, a lack of mainstream refugee organisations (Refugee Action) had resulted in refugee/asylum seeker management strategies (although locally responsive) being quite tentative. The emergence of the RCO (via

involvement with the Refugee Forum) had raised its importance as a point of access for hard to reach groups, so competent strategies were in place initially. However this bridging facility imposed upon them, was a limited one, where effective organisation was not able to continue because of lack of mainstream agency support and funding. As a result, RCO attendance at Refugee Forum meetings began to wane and this is discussed more fully at the end of the next and final sections.

In this section therefore, although agency management presents a complex and changing picture, it seems to be reasonably effective and representative to the requirements of local dispersal management. Socio economic disadvantage and lack of funding however, creates tensions for RCOs and within pivotal organisations like the Refugee Advice Centre. Tensions and difficulties attributed to funding problems, experienced by the Refugee Advice Centre, will be discussed further in the second half of the next main section of this chapter. Initially however, the chapter further examines this effective management through agency responses, and the organisational co-operation that emerges as a key finding in this research.

Co-operation between agencies: reflections on competency and compliance

The starting point here for analysis begins with the identification and role of certain key individuals, working within the statutory and voluntary sectors, who liaise across sector boundaries to encourage parties from all sides to interact. Examples of these are the Asylum Seeker Project Officer, from Denton City Council, and the Chair of the voluntary Refugee Forum (and others discussed here). The level of competence of this type of agency interaction and inclusion is again based on theoretical observations in Chapter Two; firstly by Wright

(1994), where clients (or community representatives) are able to understand and actively pursue their rights and achieve good connections with powerful external agencies; and in Foucauldian terms, where government becomes more participatory in order to avail itself of knowledge, and more effective in the management and regulation of populations (Miller and Rose, 2001/1988, Carter, 1997, Foucault, 1980f). In Barthian terms, connections are being made between agencies as a direct consequence of activities by key individuals: 'where the boundary persists despite a flow of personnel across them', where he adds that: 'stable, persisting, and often vitally important social relations are maintained across such boundaries.....and are 'often the very foundations on which embracing social systems are built' (Barth, 1969, p1/2). Through these actions, faith and RCO communities (via key personnel) become competent negotiators themselves within the process of engagement on dispersal (Wright, 1994). This is again discussed, in Barthian terms, in Chapter Five where important social relations are established and maintained and transcend often dichotomized ethnic statuses; and in Foucauldian terms where through a less repressive distribution of power, the process of governance in Romantown becomes inclusive, more effective and locally responsive as a result (Miller and Rose, 2001, Carter, 1997, Foucault, 1980f, Barth, 1969).

Local government management and control: the statutory sector reaches into the community

From a statutory perspective, the appointment of the Asylum Seeker Project Officer in 2001 by Denton Council at the inception of dispersal into Romantown, showed a level of commitment to focussed management from the beginning. Although Jacky works from within the Housing Options Centre where she liaises with NASS over housing issues, she

acknowledges that her position has snowballed since then into other areas of commitment, reflecting a degree of flexibility from the statutory sector to cross over into the voluntary sector and beyond:

I am the Asylum Project Officer employed by Denton City Council to deal with the dispersal of asylum seekers within the City of Denton. I also liaise between agencies pertaining to asylum within the statutory and voluntary sector and also provide officer support for the regional consortium for asylum seekers and refugees. I also share information between all these agencies, produce statistics, deal with issues surrounding migrant workers, issues surrounding destitution and all issues surrounding asylum seekers and refugees. I also check people's eligibility to join the city council's housing register regarding status (Fieldwork interview, 14 October, 2004)

In her liaison role, she acknowledges roles that agencies and community projects have in the dispersal process, although, as noted earlier, she has little contact with faith communities or asylum seekers, although overcomes the latter through attendance at the Refugee Forum:

NHS deal with health issues, NASS deals with harassment, the local Education Department deals with schools, ESOL classes etc. Cultural and social support comes from friendships with community leaders, relationships with other communities, the cafes, the voluntary agencies (Fieldwork interview, 14 October, 2004)

Policy initiatives on accessing hard to reach groups, have forced local statutory agencies to probe deeply within the voluntary sectors to access information (policy initiatives discussed in Chapter One and referred to earlier in this chapter). Regular attendance by regional government and local statutory representatives at Refugee Forum meetings signify the importance of this meeting as a conduit for inter agency discussion on asylum issues in

Romantown. Jacky acknowledged the importance of the Refugee Forum with its links to the Refugee Advice Centre at the statutory multi agency forum meeting where she commented that the centre is one of the few organisations legally able to assist failed asylum seekers. She added, that if it was allowed to close, the increase of risk to destitute asylum seekers in Denton would be considerable (ASMAF, 18 November, 2005).

As well as Denton Council, other statutory agencies with traditionally clear boundary demarcations, have also begun to work within a multi-agency approach. Although the police refused to be interviewed by me initially (see Chapter Four), I come into contact with their representative regularly at bi-monthly voluntary Refugee Forum meetings where I still take the minutes. Although Jonathan (now ex Chair of the Forum) complained that police presence at Forum meetings was low key, my observations from these meetings displayed a certain amount of reflexivity by the police, in that its representative frankly reported knowledge of friction between Afghanis and Pakistanis over alleged sexual harassment of Pakistani women, and how tensions were exacerbated when Kurdish joined with the Afghanis in this dispute. He admitted that social relations had been quite tense for a while, but that increased police visibility had managed to diffuse the situation. He reported that he had personally visited cafés with leaflets translated into relevant languages, even Polish. On community cohesion generally, he added that some taxi drivers had been referred to as terrorists in the wake of anti Islamic sentiment locally, but that these incidents were few and far between (Denton Refugee Forum, 14 September, 2006).

Other large scale statutory agencies such as the NHS have also been forced to tailor services particularly to local asylum populations, although initial attempts had resulted in failure (as reported in the previous chapter with regard to the allocation of Bale Street Surgery to asylum

seekers). The *New Entrant Service* seems far more flexible, and enables Carol, the nurse in charge, to visit patients at venues such as the Refugee Advice Centre. From the centre, she has broad access to both in appeal and overstaying asylum seekers who, in turn, also feel safe contacting the NHS here if they need medical help. She is also able to refer patients (whatever their status) to GPs if necessary. Carol was a good example, where participatory action and degrees of competence were displayed in her ability to cross agency boundaries successfully to more effectively manage and regulate her clients (asylum seekers) (Miller and Rose, 2001, Wright, 1994). Carol, saw her role as multi faceted and felt that she was fast becoming an expert in this particular field:

(I'm) not a district nurse, it is a cross perhaps between being a health visitor and social worker. A district nurse tends to be more locality orientated, this is more general, more holistic type, and also doing health promotion work and doing group work, relaxation groups, that sort of thing and educational training with other professions and other community groups. I have done talks about infectious diseases things like that, so there is a much broader remit reallyThe difference now is that the work is outside particular boundaries so I can go wherever there is a need to go. Bale Street was very much stuck with that group that was registered with that practice, but now I have the freedom really to see any new entrantDifferent cultures have got different expectations and from a health point of view, different illnesses. There is more likelihood in certain cultures or coming from certain countries where certain diseases are common, so it is necessary to know where people come from (Fieldwork interview, 6 May, 2005)

Reflecting this multifaceted role, Carol also linked into local schools and universities where she advised on the local asylum situation, and also become a specialist within her own profession where she delivers conference papers to medical audiences. Through her regular contact with refugees and asylum seekers within the Refugee Advice Centre, she is also able

to change or refine certain dominant medical discourses that exist on asylum, and through her role as an NHS nurse, is able to pass these on to an increasingly wider medical audience. Again Carol, or a representative from the *New Entrant Service*, maintains a presence at Refugee Forum meetings.

Faith community engagement

As the statutory sector agencies attempt to access asylum seekers, the established faith community organisations are also prepared to meet with new asylum and refugee groups. As mentioned, another key finding is the continuance of dialogue between faith communities (via faith leaders) at statutory sector levels when tensions arose with new communities of asylum seekers (Hughes, 2007). As we can see from Figure 2, on the surface it is the statutory sector that remains key here. Denton City Council has maintained the Minority Ethnic Communities Advisory Committee (MECAC) where faith, ethnic, refugee and asylum leaders could speak to each other. Although availability of cheap housing had been a main driver for dispersal, key recommendations in a recent Home Office report concur with Audit Commission recommendations and suggest that NASS should research further into links between successful dispersal and community dynamics of local authorities and populations prior to dispersal within these communities (Anie et al, 2005). Certainly Flynn suggested that there should be more government based research on the cohesive qualities of ethnically diverse communities, which has been one of the main drivers for my project (Flynn, 2003).

As far as co-operation from local faith community associations is concerned, findings seem to indicate that faith leaders are perhaps more co-operative at formal (statutory) rather than at informal (voluntary) levels, as they were invited, but refused to join the Refugee Forum,

although they do not attend the statutory refugee forum either. In Chapter Two, Foucault is again used to support this co-operative and at times difficult relationship of power and resistance (agonistic) that can be observed, in this case to describe local action by the Pakistani and Sikh communities with management agencies (Carter, 1997, Foucault, 1980f). Also displayed here are time old methods of negotiation, (that also tie with Barth's observations on traditional systems of management used by Pathans), that are being utilised by managing agencies, and these routes of dialogue are thus adapted for new asylum groups settling locally in which elders are invited to speak at these public meetings (Lowndes and Chapman, 2005, Wright, 1994, Nicolson, 1994, Barth, 1969). These public meetings however, are still statutory driven (as discussed), and repressive in that faith community leaders are expected to attend, and only those invited to do so can speak. Their refusal to join the statutory refugee forum and voluntary refugee forum meetings however, displays a measure of resistance, as does their preference to manage dialogue publicly in their own traditional ways. CSP (police) targeted dialogue also maintains strong connections with faith, refugee and asylum communities. This route of dialogue remains statutory sector driven, although there have been strong indications of other negotiation routes via a representative from Refugee Housing who is also a member of the Pakistani community, as discussed earlier (Fig 2). When I questioned Mr Singh, a Sikh elder, ex chair of the local racial equality council, and my respondent from Chapter Five, about the level of consultation of asylum dispersal, he readily presented examples of contacts he had with the city council and the police, and how he was asked to represent his community at official levels:

Yes I am a member of MECAC which is the city council you, active minority group and we meet every three months and also I represent on the police panel you knowOn the Police Advisory Panel, I attend their meetings as well, so I am aware of the situation that there. Initially you know these refugees were dumped on the city council without any consultation. I mean that was a hardship for the city council. The then leader, you know, has been changed now. At that time they had no knowledge of asylum. It was sent just like that, you have to take it, what sort of policy is this (Fieldwork interview, 24 February, 2005)

Interestingly, Mr Singh used populist discourse language such as ‘dumped’ to indicate disapproval, and there were elements of empathy towards the city council and certainly a willingness to participate in dialogue, which would indicate a willingness to co-operate from his community. There were also examples of targeted interaction where the police contacted faith leaders promptly and were willing to engage with the Sikh community to determine plans of action:

Now when we have the first meeting with the police on all these issues, even the police were not sure what to do... so we in effect pressed the police that you should do something..... If anything happened...the police they feel, this is a concern to the community, what they do is immediately they call the leaders in. So obviously they meet privately, the police and discuss the issue. So we go from there (Fieldwork interview, 24 February, 2005)

The pursuit of knowledge about community issues, and in particular issues of community cohesion regarding asylum by the police, creates a shift from the public to the private sphere to acquire information. Again Miller and Rose spoke of this collective sharing of knowledge in mental health management in Chapter Two, and analogies with this approach can be drawn here (Miller and Rose, 2001). Mr Singh, who has lived in Romantown for over 40 years, has

much experience of local racial politics (through his Denton Racial Equality membership) at local government and community level, and is now particularly targeted for advice by local CSPs. It was via MECAC that the Sikh and the Pakistani community leaders had initially met with the Kurdish community, but dialogue has continued since then via the police and Denton City Council and also via Refugee Housing:

I know the leader of the Kurds people personally so we meet regularly, we have a meeting with the police, a meeting with the city council leaders you know, we have a meeting with the housing associations that sort of thing, so to me we have got all these actions taken very properly by each department you know so things are settling now
(Fieldwork interview, 24 February, 2005)

Although Mr Singh seems compliant, in the sense that he participates in dialogue when called upon with the local council and police, he feels confident enough to criticise national and local government on multicultural and dispersal policies through which he sees asylum seekers dispersed increasingly to multicultural areas like Romantown. Again Foucault's writings in Chapter Two support possibilities for resistance by Mr Singh to what he perceives as the expectation by local and central government that multicultural communities like Romantown should continually accept asylum seekers (Carter, 1997, Foucault, 1980f). These actions also suggest levels of competence in that he is willing to speak with agencies to manage any community tensions in line with Wright's (1994) analysis:

We are all a multi cultural society now so why is there always Romantown area.... That is why we are concerned, multicultural doesn't just mean in Romantown only, what about the other areas, so why even the city council don't support them you know, other area, why does it always concentrate on Romantown..... why not in Hangingtree, why they bring them here,..... It will be equally supported you know, if they can but they don't. So that is what I am looking for that there should be fairness you know. That there doesn't seem to be any fairness regarding settlement of these refugees you know (Fieldwork interview, 24 February, 2005)

Although, as noted, there is evidence of strong links locally to the council and the police, Mr Singh makes the point that dispersal should also be to other areas in the city, not just Romantown. He is careful however to suggest a mainly white middle class suburb where Sikh settlement is uncommon, which again could be a critical observation of dispersal settlement policy generally to multicultural areas like Romantown.

Although there seems to be good regular contact between faith communities (certainly the Sikh community) and the statutory sector at formal and informal levels, as noted, in Chapter Five, there seems to be uncertain associations at informal levels (Fig 2). However, at a local conference, Mr Singh was approached by the leader of the Bosnian and the Kurdish communities, and as he said previously, he knows the Kurdish leader personally, so we can only presume that backstage contact is also maintained:

The leader of the Bosnian and Kurds you know, they in fact requested to the Denton Indian people that we are new in this city and we would like to have your full co-operation here you know so that we can settle. If there is any sort of problem, don't hesitate you know. We are also human beings and we like to live like human beings like decent citizens. That was a message from them. I mean, it is a good thing (Fieldwork interview, 24 February, 2005)

Sikhs, as part of their religious commitment, also provide food daily for the poor and destitute, so any destitute asylum seeker could get a hot meal from the local Sikh gurdwara:

We don't charge them a penny you know. It is a free service. They (community) come. They donate stuff themselves, they prepare stuff themselves from the community you know. And then they (asylum seekers) eat it, so it is all community you know. Which I think is very good (Fieldwork interview, 24 February, 2005)

In Barthian terms (see Chapter Two), this backstage activity continues on two counts: where there is overt conformity to the group: 'where insecurity itself acts as a constraint on inter ethnic contact', Sikhs continue to practice their religious commitments which include serving the poor locally; and: 'where the characteristics that are stigmatic in terms of the dominant majority culture can covertly be made the objects of transaction' where links to asylum seekers and caring for their needs takes place (Barth, 1969, p21, p17). In Foucauldian terms, this backstage management could also be classed as a form of resistance, and Wright's observations on competence are also relevant in that they are able to manage community relations their own way. Mr Singh's comments have suggested that the Sikh community is co-operative and concerned for asylum seekers' wellbeing, although responses through the media seemed to conflict with this, showing their Sikh respondents as less supportive (examined in Chapter Five).

Co-operation from the larger Pakistani community over asylum issues has been more difficult to assess from an agency perspective. There have been tensions between its members and new immigrant groups of Kurds and Afghanis reported by the police representative at the Refugee Forum meeting, reported through the media, and observed by Nasir in Chapter Five (Denton Refugee Forum, September, 2006, *Daily Mail*, 2004). In Chapter Five, the less expansive

nature of the local Pakistani community was examined and the expected welcome towards new asylum groups had been seen as more reticent because of particular community dynamics. Jacky, the Asylum Seeker Project Officer from Denton Council, also expressed knowledge of this group by acknowledging cultural differences between Pakistani and Kurdish Muslims, where religion had not bonded these groups, and that divisions (she felt) would not necessarily fade over time:

I think that it depends very much on the nationality of the asylum seeker. With the Pakistani Muslims for example, there can be no lessening of a hold on their culture even within second and third generations, where the elders perhaps still want things done the old way. So any divisions between communities and asylum seekers would not weaken in that way (Fieldwork interview, 14 October, 2004)

Statutory, voluntary sector agencies and faith communities had however been active to manage any tensions that arose with the new immigrants. The local Pakistani Imam I interviewed confirmed the existence of more informal links between the elders of his community and Sikh elders to discuss community problems over asylum, so other knowledge existed of backstage negotiations taking place regarding dispersal between these two large community groups (also substantiated by Nasir's comments in Chapter Five). The Imam admitted that the Pakistani elders have less connection to the police (unlike the Sikhs), and generally preferred to manage problems themselves. This may reflect the more segregated nature of this particular community (also commented on by Bains in Chapter Five). However the Imam stressed that elders within the Pakistani community would co-operate at local council level and had attended council organised MECAC meetings to settle differences. Plus, as noted, there had also been incidences when the local Refugee Housing and local council representatives had acted as intermediaries between the Kurdish and Pakistani communities.

The Pakistani community remains stigmatised by the wider community with regard to their connections to terrorist activity which are widely reported. As observed by Nasir in Chapter Five, this has had the effect of restricting Pakistani movements to other parts of the city. The practice of endogamy also has the effect of severely limiting integration with other groups (although common historical and geographical bonds help to retain links with the Sikh community). Through living in Romantown they do maintain a level of visibility where they are generally viewed less ambiguously, although their lifestyle shows a resistance to policy directives on integration. Preservation of what they have in Romantown may be to maintain an equitable relationship with the Kurdish community however, although as long as both groups retain a distance, in governance terms this will remain hard to gauge.

Other Christian religious organisations also played key and integral roles in caring and advocating for asylum populations within Romantown, and their role, through the Refugee Advice Centre, will be incorporated further in the final section of this chapter.

Committed local university and multifaith centre

There is also strong commitment to multicultural and multi-faith in Romantown by powerful local institutions such as Denton University and, more recently, the Lottery funded Multifaith Centre which is housed on the university campus. From within the university, there is a strong commitment to accessibility and the regeneration of Romantown. Degree courses in community and youth studies and community regeneration provide cohorts of students for placements within the many voluntary projects (over 600) in the Romantown area (CVS, 2003). Also, students from refugee populations, such as refugee leaders from the Persian, Somalian and Cameroonian communities, have all embarked on degrees here. There is a new

centre for research in community regeneration which began in 2005 and which is headed by Dr Buller (another key individual in the integrative process), himself a Sikh, who also has strong connections with the Sikh community in Romantown:

I have stayed in touch with agencies through the placement of students, so there has been an ongoing relationship with that area, but in terms of the role, for me it's a combination of supporting and working with agencies who are working in that area to provide support for a whole range of things which might be in terms of training, it might be in terms of joint partnerships where we bid for funding to deliver projects, so on a range of levels there are those sorts of linkages. But I suppose a particular role for me is about how I can bring the University of Denton closer to that area..... I think it is important for people who are living and working in those areas to know that there is somebody in an institution who they can ring up and ask questions about how to get access to the university, how to build partnerships, how to understand the resources available within an institution, that sort of bridge-link for me..... I suppose an extension of what used to be the community worker role and with this Centre for Regeneration that's the brief.... do outreach work, to make links and to bring the university closer to areas like Romantown ...people contacted us regularly and still do about issues, advice, proposals, invitations to join with them in partnerships with doing pieces of work and most recently, Community Safety Partnership which is about if you like, a resettlement strategy where they were talking to us about trying to in a way do an update of the study which we did.... So at a variety of levels ranging from very small refugee community up to policy makers, we get contacted to provide advice on issues and joint work (Fieldwork interview, 26 October, 2005)

There are also other links (via local research funded through the Community Empowerment Fund) to encourage integration, where the university and local city partnerships explore the feasibility of initiatives such as a Forum of Faiths which seeks to encourage interfaith dialogue (a focus of research activity for many years) (Weller and Wolfe, 2003). The university's Professor of Inter-Religious Relations has been particularly active in ensuring the inclusion of

the religious question into the 2001 Census; writes extensively on religious discrimination; initiated the publication of a widely sold multifaith directory; and is one of the founder members of the Multifaith Centre (discussed next).

This university is highly participatory in its acquisition of knowledge of Romantown, where Dr Buller's department particularly is committed to this reciprocal process, through community training at venues within Romantown; continued funding applications for community based research; and student placement (many of whom live in Romantown). Therefore we see a locally responsible university that is not cut off from its surrounding environment. Boundaries were porous in that both statutory and voluntary sectors were able to feed into this university, and the university itself was reaching out into the community in a range of ways.

Importantly the Multifaith Centre (MFC) had also emerged from Denton University. Through its name, remit, and research (professorial input on inter religious relations via the university), it also sought to be a conduit for discussion for the many faiths that live in and around Denton, and Romantown in particular. Although the teaching of religious studies at undergraduate level has now been disbanded within the university, the MFC flourished under the leadership of Maureen its Director (another key individual in the local multicultural organisational landscape), and the building provides a space for faith communities to meet and converse. Unlike Dr Buller, who sees his role at the university as working *in* Romantown, Maureen felt that the MFC suffered from being perceived as Christian based and too isolated from Romantown. As a consequence, she explained, she had to network hard to achieve results:

My role within the communities, with the faith communities within Romantown and Appletree has really been one of doing a lot of networking since I started. Getting to know people, getting to find out if you can what the issues are, what the problems might be. There is still a lot of work that we have to do because we are based outside the area and we are actually just getting to know people and people getting to know me in that they have some trust and respect of me and then you can begin to work when people talk to me I have found some surprise when they expect the Director of a Multifaith Centre to be a man and to wear a dog collar, and they expect (me) to be a Christian (Fieldwork interview, 25 October, 2004)

It is only recently that Muslim groups have started to attend functions at the MFC where Sikh and other faith groups, such as the Bahai and Jewish communities, have put in regular attendances since it began. Again this maybe attributable to the more segregationist nature of the Pakistani Muslim community. Maureen also feels that contact with asylum seekers is minimal and difficult to achieve again because of the MFC's locality:

I don't know whether we have had any asylum seekers here. I really don't know. Not off the top of my head and we probably haven't kept, monitored if you like to that degree..... we send out our leaflets and our newsletter and our programme around Romantown which is where they tend to be. People who I know work with asylum seekers know what's on here but I wouldn't know if we have had any and I would probably on that premise doubt it. And that's a sadness to me, because it would be interesting to do something...but then there's the logistics of people getting here as opposed to wherever they might be... and the logistics of knowing where these asylum seekers are, because people I talk to they seem to get buried for a while and people disappear. Within the community, they are difficult to trace (Fieldwork interview, 25 October, 2004)

The MFC promotes the expansive nature of multiculturalism expounded by Parekh and Modood, by providing a transformative space where faith communities can meet, but this is

limited if certain faith and ethnic communities are not willing or able to attend (Parekh, 2000, Modood, 1997, 1994). Unlike Dr Buller and his department that is able to be more participatory in its actions, the MFC remains rather distant and for Maureen access to certain groups is harder to achieve. Thus this dichotomy exists in which segregationism within communities like Romantown means that communities do not leave Romantown to attend the MFC and thus maintain elements of parallel living which are regarded by Phillips, Cattle et al and others as imprudent. However, Romantown does provide a protective space for the more vulnerable ethnic groups which include refugees and asylum seekers and other racialised minorities such as the Pakistani community. As stated by Maureen, Muslim groups (mainly Pakistani) are beginning to attend MFC functions more, thus demonstrating a degree of interaction by this segregated community, although attendance by asylum seekers is still minimal.

Within this section there has been some demonstration based on clear evidence of multi-agency approaches and work within Romantown, particularly through the energies of committed individuals who are critical to the success of asylum seeker settlement and integration. Key posts, such as the Asylum Seeker Project Officer, the *New Entrant Service* nurse, the local university academic, the Director of the Multifaith Centre, the Chair of the Refugee Forum, faith leaders and others have all also played lead roles in ensuring that agency boundaries have been crossed, connections made and knowledge shared. Thus less repressive forms of power have been exerted by the statutory sectors, where government agencies have become more participatory in their search for knowledge as they reach deeply within voluntary sector activity to furnish themselves with that knowledge. The faith communities also act in competent ways through their actions, whether these are through public meetings with asylum leaders at local council meetings, or through backstage management between

themselves. In my observations, the Sikh community appear to retain more of a public presence compared to their Pakistani neighbours who remain more distant, so community relationships with the latter maybe harder to gauge.

I also observed some of the difficulties and tensions in these accounts. A newly emerging refugee and asylum sector (via the Refugee Forum), and agencies like the Refugee Advice Centre that support them, increasingly suffer hardship within a restrictive policy climate that penalises and marginalises asylum seekers. This makes it difficult for RCOs to become part of this multi-agency strategy and competently engage. Therefore, before the final section of this chapter which concentrates on the more elusive aspects of dispersal in Romantown, there will be a discussion on the emerging role of the RCO and the extent of its influence in helping refugee and asylum groups, and their local investment in Romantown.

The role of the RCO and its level of participation in Romantown

As Zetter et al concluded in their publication *Refugee Community Organisations and Dispersal*: ‘on one level there is indeed strong evidence in the literature to suggest that RCOs make a vital contribution in meeting the welfare needs of their communities’ (Zetter et al, 2005, p199). However these authors problematised ways in which successful integration is measured, and observe the use of more quantifiable indicators of employment and training to measure integration by government, rather than softer qualitative indicators such as feelings of well being which have been concentrated on here (ibid). Zetter et al focussed primarily on refugee populations with status, but asylum seekers will always remain separate where restrictionist policy measures mean they come under the auspices of NASS, they have limited access to welfare payments, and are not allowed to work. However ‘integration’ can take on

more localised meanings in Romantown (discussed in Chapter Five) where asylum seekers are able to find work and where strong networks can exist for them. Thus the role of the RCO becomes more fluid and locally responsive within these local integration management processes, although, as discussed here, it has its limitations. To counter these limitations however, the strong voluntary sector presence in Romantown does have the effect of opening up possibilities for a more participatory form of governance where they are able to strongly resist statutory agencies that are perceived as failing in their duty of care. Again, expectations levelled at local government to access hard to reach groups means they have to take increasing responsibility for the well-being of an area and the people who live there. However these participatory actions by the statutory sector can also be perceived as repressive and small organisations can feel that they are not well enough supported, and their actions become less co-operative and more resistant as a result.

The growth of RCOs in Romantown has certainly been significant over the past five years. When counting the number of RCOs in existence here, Fox obtained details of 19 (high numbers when compared with Birmingham which has 30), many of which had been operating for up to four years, indicating that groups were mobilising themselves at an early stage in dispersal (Fox, 2006, Zetter et al, 2005). Most of these were located on or near to Romantown Road, so nearby for their service users (See Fig 1 at the beginning of Chapter Five). Initially start-up funding was provided from Denton Council and from organisations such as Refugee Housing, CVS, SureStart, Refugee Action and the Denton Millennium Network. However, RCOs now face a funding crisis. As this start-up funding runs out, in an attempt to secure further funding, many RCOs are consolidating their efforts and are being encouraged to do so by Denton Council and other large charitable organisations. Rizah, the leader of the Bosnian Community (an organisation that has been in existence for some time) who is the only paid

RCO leader in Romantown, gives his time freely to RCOs to help them capacity build and apply for funding. He is also Treasurer of the Refugee Forum and another key individual in the dispersal landscape,

Lack of funding and support, has resulted in RCO leaders complaining of poor treatment by the statutory sector, and many find it difficult to provide the bridging facility that is required of them by the council and the Refugee Forum. This may account for the drop in attendance at Refugee Forum meetings where many now retreat within their own informal networks and make declarations of creating their own forum to discuss funding strategies (discussed earlier). The Kurdish network has always been elusive and never really been able to form properly. After successive attempts by Denton Council and the Refugee Advice Centre were made to encourage them to create an association, it operated for a time from a café near to Romantown Road (see Figs 1 and 2). RCOs as noted however, are now becoming increasingly oppositional to round table discussions with managing agencies at the Refugee Forum, and regular multi-agency contact with them is becoming more difficult (although not impossible as discussed next and later in this chapter).

It is not always the existence of an organised RCO that is crucial to the maintenance of a healthy network, and the Kurdish community is an example of this. Although their leader does maintain a presence on occasions, at Refugee Forum Management Committee meetings plus CSP and MECAC meetings when required to do so, as noted, the Kurdish Community Association has failed in its attempts to form on numerous occasions. Zetter et al also observed instances of this when distinguishing between formal and informal networking in refugee communities (Zetter et al, 2005). He stated: 'there was for example, a notable resistance on the part of specific refugee groups to formalising networks. Not wishing to be

part of formal channels or to participate in the funding-driven political economy of refugee organisation were the primary reasons given' (ibid, p201). The informality of the Kurdish network is discussed further in the final section.

Other RCOs, like the Persian Cultural Association (PCA), are more visible, and their operations more regulated; and they present a more integrated image (as noted in Chapter Five). Interestingly though, Mehran (the leader of the PCA), does not attend the Refugee Forum regularly either following disagreements with the ex Chair Jonathan in 2005, who complained that he was not committed enough to the forum (DRAC, 2005). The Chair of the Refugee Forum has now been superseded twice, but Mehran still does not appear at Forum meetings, although he may, like Arif the Kurdish leader, attend management committee meetings on occasions. Mehran does maintain strong links with other high profile agencies such as the local university, and is very active himself in acquiring funding, and recently promoted the PCA as a viable commercial enterprise. Other RCO representation from the Congolese (2), Somalian, Zimbabwean, Afghani, Cameroonian and Sudanese associations, have a heavier commitment to the Refugee Forum, although latterly their attendance has also become infrequent, and only one of the Congolese groups was represented recently (Denton Refugee Forum, July, 2007). Reasons here could be that as RCO membership settles in Romantown, it has less need for the Refugee Forum where funding streams have dried up. This may ultimately have an adverse effect on the survival of Refugee Forum where its usefulness as an agency conduit disappears. There are elements also here, where (as noted by Zetter et al) too much responsibility is put on these poorly funded RCOs to manage and represent their communities, and in which: 'the positive role of RCOs for the integration of refugees is a dominant assumption in the literature, but one that is more often asserted than fully demonstrated' (Zetter, et al, 2005, p200). Zetter et al proceeded to observe the inability

of RCOs to fulfil tasks placed on them by statutory agencies because of lack of infrastructure within (RCO) organizations and serious lack of funding (ibid). They also felt funding was crucial to the survival and effectiveness of formed RCOs and many remained vulnerable due to shortage of funds (ibid). They listed key themes raised by RCO respondents that focused on, short term funding and sustainability; increased competition for shrinking amounts of money; and the increased bureaucratisation surrounding funding applications (ibid). Dr Buller concurred with Zetter et al and, interestingly, he suggested that repressive action came from both the statutory *and* voluntary sectors, and that there should be more funding and support from the larger well funded charities and the local council, and less responsibility placed on the RCO:

I see examples of people working within their national groupings, and some come together for different purposes, the Refugee Forum has given them the opportunity to work together, but again I think that this is a responsibility that I don't locate with those communities, that are located with the agencies like the city council, the Council for Voluntary Services, the Racial Equality Commission...They are the people with resources, who strategically will be saying it is our role to support the coming together of those groups so that they can support each other. A small refugee women's group hasn't got the capacity to understand the importance of working across the city. That role is for somebody else to create (Fieldwork interview, 26 October, 2004)

Although RCOs are retreating away from the Refugee Forum, there is much evidence to suggest the vital role that the Refugee Forum plays in grouping agencies together from all sectors in order to engage with many of the more difficult issues surrounding asylum dispersal in Romantown. Issues such as destitution have always been difficult for the local statutory sector to manage but at least it acknowledges its existence, (where the Home Office until recently has not) and it can be presented as a topic for discussion at Refugee Forum meetings.

Thus, in Foucauldian terms, actions from the statutory and, on occasions, voluntary sectors can be regarded as management orientated (repressive) in that insufficient infrastructural support is provided for these small RCOs to operate effectively as inter-agency conduits for their service users. Also issues such as destitution are allowed to continue. However within the competent atmosphere of community governance in Romantown (Foucault and Wright), these small organisations are not completely captive to the dictates of management either, in that they are now choosing to disengage from public dialogue, and dispersal agencies will have to find more inventive ways of maintaining contact with them.

Research findings from this section added to findings from the previous section, focus on the emerging importance of the productive nature of relationships that exist within Romantown between the statutory and voluntary sectors. The former is now under obligation by government, to avail itself of knowledge of the communities they service and to reach the hard to access. The local university is also participatory in the pursuit of community knowledge, although the university located multifaith centre finds this harder to achieve. The voluntary sector in Romantown is well established and confident enough to vocalise opposition should it feel that the statutory sector is exerting too much power and not providing enough support. A demonstration of the strength of the voluntary sector is its establishment as the main conduit for dispersal management discussion. Through the voluntary Refugee Forum, lynchpin voluntary organisations such as the Refugee Advice Centre (discussed in the final section), emerge to achieve prominence. Also community champions from all sectors regularly cross agency boundaries, to pressurise for action which, as a consequence, achieves continued interconnectedness between sectors.

However, echoing Chapter Five, it is the maintenance of connection between the managing agencies, faith communities and RCOs where governance becomes more complex. Competent action is exerted by the statutory agencies to achieve continued access and dialogue between residents and asylum seekers at formal levels, and informal discussions by faith (mainly Sikh) community leaders and RCO leaders has helped to quell tensions where backstage discussions continue between these large resident community organisations. However, the anticipated bonding between Muslim groups of Pakistani residents and Kurdish asylum seekers did not take place (as discussed in Chapter Five). The Pakistani community, although fulfilling certain statutory obligations with regard to continued public dialogue with asylum seekers, were not as publicly minded as their Sikh neighbours and continued dialogue remained fairly clouded. Although RCOs were quiet heroic in their attempts to support their clients, on further examination, it became clear that a majority of them were not able to take on the bridging responsibilities required of them by the statutory and voluntary sectors and attendance at the Refugee Forum has fallen away. Poor funding also affected the Refugee Advice Centre and is discussed further in the final section. So although agency management in Romantown presented an impressive picture of competent engagement from all sectors (see Fig 2), it was often the community champions, reticent RCOs and poorly funded agencies like the Refugee Advice Centre (and Refugee Forum) that equally shared the responsibility with the statutory sectors in keeping everything glued together. It is these persistently ambivalent inter-agency relationships that has forced statutory sectors to be more participatory and elevated statuses of marginalised groups to a new level in Romantown. Added to this are established modes of competent action by existing immigrant residents (and asylum seekers) through which there has evolved an expectation of resistance to statutory sector directives locally. It is the quality of this resistance that has also been flagged up for discussion throughout this chapter.

Even though the effectiveness of the Refugee Forum as a multi-agency conduit may wax and wane, the existence of 19 RCOs in Denton is impressive and says much about the commitment of its local refugee and asylum populations. For many of these groups, the Refugee Advice Centre remains the hub of refugee and asylum activity in Romantown and provides the venue, management and administration for the Refugee Forum. Vital information on destitute numbers and the general tone of feeling of the refugee and asylum populations, emanate from clients who call into the Refugee Advice Centre for food and assistance. Through my observation and through taking minutes at Refugee Forum meetings, it was apparent how tentative the existence of this particular lynchpin organisation was and lack of funding and overstretched volunteers had led to many incidences of threatened closure. It was hardly surprising therefore, that much of the more negative sides to dispersal were observed by me, from within the centre, and much finger pointing was directed at agencies from all sectors considered guilty of neglect. From here, reasons for the withdrawal of RCOs from Refugee Forum meetings and unwillingness to engage become apparent when destitute Kurdish were forced to rely heavily on informal local networks for support, and the process of governance became less inclusive, co-operative and collaborative and more conflictive as a result. Through the use of narratives from my fieldwork diary, this next section again substantiates the need for individual and closer examination of dispersal communities in line with the research enquiry of this thesis, this time from an agency management perspective. The focus moves away from the congeniality of the public arena, to the private workings of this badly funded charity that suffers at the hands of the Home Office, and conflicts with other local organisations from both the statutory and voluntary sectors, yet continues to provide a service when all other avenues for their clients have been explored.

A change of view: narratives from within a refugee advice centre

As Jacky observed earlier, the Refugee Advice Centre remains the only agency in Romantown able to deal with destitute asylum seekers. However, it also performs other roles that other agencies are too overstretched to deal with. These include, Section 4 applications and housing allocation; applications for replacement Applicant Registration (ARC) cards; liaising with landlords over poor quality housing; applications to the local social fund for furniture and white goods; contacting clients' solicitors; writing letters; driving licence applications and queries; signposting generally; providing food and toiletries; and more or less anything else that other agencies cannot manage. From within the Refugee Advice Centre I observed volunteers with no particular expertise grappling with a large cross section of issues.

This final section therefore, presents a narrative of what existence is like from within this agency, from both a volunteer and client perspective. To assist in this, boxed stories from my fieldwork diary will be presented to guide thinking and analysis.

The reality for volunteers, RCOs and asylum seekers within the Refugee Advice Centre is far removed from the friendly, co-operative faces that gather round the table at Refugee Forum meetings just downstairs, and it is from within this small charity that the more uncomfortable realities of dispersal were observed. The advice centre relies totally on ad hoc voluntary contributions (mainly from Refugee Housing and local Christian organisations), and rent free accommodation from the Bosnian Centre. All caseworkers are volunteers, and if asked if they felt that they were filling a gap in services, their response would be more that of placing a finger in the dyke.

The Refugee Advice Centre came into being because of no Refugee Action presence in the city (as previously discussed). Its lack of direct funding however, did supply a measure of autonomy, where other agencies had constraints on what they were actually able to do for failed/Section 4 asylum seekers who form a large percentage of the centre's clientele. The advice centre has dealt with Section 4 applications for hard case support (among its many other duties) and in this way has helped clients circumnavigate the mandatory five hour legal aid allowance, and freed up time for Law Centre and Immigration Advisory Service caseworkers. Through its direct link with the Refugee Forum, the advice centre is also able to link out directly to the many managing agencies in Romantown, and its particular knowledge on asylum and dispersal issues are shared out in this way, although Mary, the senior volunteer caseworker, heavily monitors the level of information that is presented to agencies at Refugee Forum meetings. Mary, who concentrates on Section 4 applicants, is in her late sixties and takes very few holidays. It was she, Jonathan and Greg who were the key individuals responsible for forming the Refugee Forum and Advice Centre (discussed earlier), so she has been a committed presence since the beginning. On one occasion when Jonathan was ill and unable to carry on his duties, it was suggested that the advice centre should close for three weeks during the summer months, but volunteers decided against this and Mary came back from her holiday a week early. Jonathan has now left to further his Amnesty International role, so Mary now directs the centre herself. Greg continues as Chair of the Refugee Forum. Again, all three are key individuals on the dispersal landscape in Romantown.

Although volunteers were committed to the advice centre, administrative skills were lacking, and as volunteers they were of course free to leave at any time. There was a central computer filing system for clients, but the volunteers were generally not computer literate and most filing was done manually. Varying spellings of names and lack of documentation made

accurate filing difficult and time consuming. There was only one phone in the office and no internet connection until recently, and a fax machine that was shared with the Bosnian Centre next door. The fax machine was crucial as it remained the most effective way to contact NASS at Croydon regarding Section 4 support and any other queries.

Most problems were exacerbated because of the inaccessibility of NASS. To circumnavigate this problem, Mary and volunteers had gone to great lengths to network locally with housing providers rather than through NASS. *Regional* NASS was a reasonably accessible institution, but in reality was only an outreach from the main centre at Croydon and had very little influence locally, only catering for asylum seekers who were staying with families and relatives. Dealing directly with housing providers rather than having to negotiate via NASS at Croydon, meant issues over poor quality housing were addressed more effectively. Through its determination to directly manage problems for clients, the Refugee Advice Centre could be regarded as competent in its actions, and also through its resistance to dilatory actions by the Home Office. Relationships with the Home Office are discussed further in this section. The Refugee Advice Centre through its connection to the Refugee Forum also acted as the main conduit for *all* agencies to the elusive Kurdish community from where knowledge on this particular community could be shared outwards, and this is discussed next.

Kurdish and other networks in action

The Refugee Advice Centre's main clients were Kurdish, and from my vantage point within the centre, the effectiveness of its informal support network could be observed. As noted, no official Kurdish association was in existence in Romantown, and this presented a void at Refugee Forum meetings (although their leader played out his role of mediator with resident

groups at CSP and MECAC meetings, as already stated). However, many small groups of young Kurdish men arriving together with friends for support and advice, seemed to indicate the strength and support of this particular group. The advice centre was also responsible for facilitating accommodation (via Section 4 applications) for this large group (which in all probability was shared amongst its membership). The strength of this particular network was reflected in Kurdish clients' wishes to remain in Romantown, and my observation notes demonstrated this:

Mary has to tell the Kurdish clients now that they are to be moved to Manchester and they will not be happy. Asif, one of their spokespeople, has to tell them in Kurdish that they will not be allowed to stay. They are asking why, and are being told by the advice centre that Denton has many Section 4, and it is the turn of another city to take these people. There are around 130 waiting for accommodation in Denton. This could have the effect that people will disappear as they will not want to leave Denton (17 March, 2005)

This observation reveals wishes by the large Kurdish community generally to remain close to established networks in Romantown, and indicated a preference to become destitute here rather than accept housing elsewhere. This desire to remain in a locality where networks exist, allies itself with observations by Dawson (2002) in Hull, where lack of a network presence resulted in asylum seeker drift to other parts of the country. Existing networks are also a prerequisite to dispersal as flagged up by the Audit Commission (2000c) (Robinson et al, 2003). Although the Kurdish network had not visibly formed, there is evidence of its influence and success locally by the predominance of Kurdish shop fronts along Romantown Road, and via the extensive numbers attending the advice centre. The potentially large numbers of destitute Kurds in Romantown may account for their reticence to form an RCO and attend Refugee Forum meetings, where they would be exposed to the general glare of agency dispersal management. Also its predominance of young men often meant that disputes with each other were common (as commented on by Ahmed in Chapter Five). Zetter et al observed earlier, when distinguishing between formal and informal networking in refugee communities:

‘there was for example, a notable resistance on the part of specific refugee groups to formalising networks. Not wishing to be part of formal channels or to participate in the funding-driven political economy of refugee organisation were the primary reasons given’ (Zetter et al, 2005, p201). Although a community centre and a venue were found, the Kurdish café still remained the most popular meeting point until its recent closure, although other cafés have subsequently opened (as also discussed). This evidences the importance of the informal community space for this particular group, but the café also became a space where they welcomed others, displaying a certain amount of reciprocity from this group towards the communities in Romantown and the wider community. In Chapter Five, Nasir, the young Pakistani interviewed, observed difficulties between Pakistani elders and young Kurdish asylum seekers, and how their youth and inexperience at negotiating at local government level could also exacerbate problems here. After a discussion I had with Jonathan, my observation notes also reflected on his comments about difficulties the local council had in encouraging this predominant group to integrate more at official levels:

There was a general discussion after that regarding the city council and the Iraqi Kurds. The person who deals with community issues knows very little about the Kurdish community. It seems that they still have problems in organising themselves and until they do, things will be difficult for them. They are in the process of voting in a leader at the moment but the turnout has been low. Really they need somebody to organise their new centre and the manager here feels he may have to do this. The council are pressing them to get themselves organised but they are finding it difficult. Again in their own country, they are probably not used to doing this for themselves and most of the Kurds are young men anyway who do not want to spend all their time in organising others (2 June, 2005)

From this observation and on reflection, it would seem that Kurdish organisation may benefit the local council rather than the Kurdish community itself. Many new Kurdish businesses have been opening up on Romantown Road which in turn supplies employment for the Kurdish community, thus intensifying its influence locally. Although there has been reluctance to organise at official levels, commercially this group seems to be managing (also observed by

Nasir, in Chapter Five). I had noted that life would be difficult for them if they did not participate in Refugee Forum activities, but on reflection, I think the opposite is true. The Kurdish in Romantown have managed to create a strong network without an established RCO to support them or represent them at Refugee Forum meetings, and this does not seem to have diminished their standing locally.

It is obvious from these observations however, that relationships between the Kurdish community and the agencies that attempt to manage them are fraught with difficulties. However, its size, its youth, its status, and potential dangers to cohesion locally where fracas with local Pakistanis flare up from time to time, intensifies the focus of local government to access them. As the need for agency access continues, the poorly funded Refugee Advice Centre retain prominence as one of the few public areas where this group tend to gather.

The strength of the Kurdish network in Romantown has helped this large group settle and survive even when many of their numbers are overstayers. Problems arise however, when asylum seekers have no networks to fall back on (also acknowledged by Jacky, the Asylum Seeker Project Officer from the local council). Again the anchoring effects of networks are discussed by Dawson (in Hull), and presented by the Audit Commission as factors for successful dispersal (Dawson, 2002, Audit Commission, 2000c). Without network support, these groups become particularly vulnerable. Although the Refugee Advice Centre was able to function within grey areas of immigration status, these problems were particularly difficult to deal with. The following are two extracts from my observation notes from within the advice centre that presented scenarios where networks were lacking.

The first case concerned a young woman who had to leave Romantown to go to London where there was a larger Eritrean Association to help her; and the second case presented a more satisfactory outcome where Gilbert was able to survive within Romantown (Gilbert's case is also approached in Chapters Four and Five, and earlier in this chapter). At this time, the Zimbabwean presence in Romantown was insignificant, but Gilbert was still able to draw on an integrative set of community networks, particularly through church contacts, and via the advice centre:

A heartbreaking case just came in and a good example of where there are no support networks set up. This young woman was from Eritrea and could not return because she was in fear of her life. She does not know if her family is alive or dead. Her support from NASS finishes at the end of this month. If she applies for hard case support she will automatically be sent back to Eritrea.... She also has no children so there is no safeguard there either.....As she had been to a local Roman Catholic church in the past, I sent her back there to talk to the priest who maybe able to help her with some food and give her some emotional support. But that is all that we can do for her. She may stay on here illegally of course. The advice centre does what it can and will hand out food and other provisions like tissues, deodorant, for example (17 March, 2005)

Another problem has arisen with a man from Zimbabwe who has failed but at the moment is living with friends who have leave to remain. The church he goes to pays half his rent, and the advice centre pays the other half. This was agreed for a period of three months and this time period has now expired. The advice centre can no longer afford to pay his rent, so it is a question now of where he can get money to survive. He does voluntary work for a couple of churches, so the suggestion here is that perhaps they could afford to keep him through the collection plate as he is working voluntarily for them (3 May, 2005)

In Gilbert's case, the Zimbabwean Association has now formed locally and he is able to work regularly as a gardener and handyman and attends local courses in Romantown. Without the Refugee Advice Centre, Gilbert's situation would have been very grave indeed as, initially as a failed asylum seeker, he would have had nowhere to go. Through the centre, he still receives food and manages to access help from the Churches and other voluntary sector organisations. However, through living in Romantown and keeping a low profile, he was able to work and keep himself in this way. Gilbert has always been able to find accommodation through his Zimbabwean contacts that are willing to support him even if he has no work. As stated, the Zimbabwean Association formed only recently, but informal networks were able to sustain

Gilbert quite early on. Again it is the strength of asylum seeker networks and the voluntary sector generally in Romantown, that are able to resist the difficulties imposed by central government in which Gilbert potentially would have been forcibly removed if he had applied to NASS for support. As observed in Chapter Five, Gilbert retains a low profile but regularly visits the Refugee Advice Centre for food. He can also access medical help at one of the new local NHS drop in centres. This level of contact is noted by the advice centre volunteers and regular links with him are maintained in this way.

The Refugee Advice Centre versus the Home Office and other agencies

Tackling Home Office bureaucracy was something else that caseworkers/volunteers undertook on a regular basis, using a single phone line and a shared fax. Draconian and restrictive measures in place purposefully made contacting the Home Office extremely difficult and this, in turn, presented problems to clients who needed to contact them, and volunteers who helped them. One could question whether an established large charity like Refugee Action would have had more success through its funding connections with the Home Office, rather than the advice centre which had none. Power divisions between the advice centre and the Home Office are very much top down, and information sharing only occurs through sheer determination by advice centre volunteers where, through persistence, client problems are eventually jointly tackled. Thus the relationship between these two agencies remained one-sided and tense. As an observer/volunteer I would often become involved in these very difficult cases, and through my own experiences, realised how difficult accessing information from the Home Office and other mainstream agencies such as the DVLA and IOM was (see below). It is incidences like these that expose the fire fighting nature of the Refugee Advice

Centre and also its limitations in attempting to work with these government departments.

Again narratives are used from my fieldwork diary to explain events:

Another problem arose in the form of an Iraqi Kurd who wanted to return to Iraq to his family. This type of repatriation can be facilitated by the IOM (International Organisation for Migration) which I think is funded via the EU. Here they will be provided with a ticket and £500 to pay for a taxi/bus through Jordan to Iraq (at this point there was no direct flight to Baghdad). However, he has been refused transit visas through Jordan, Syria, Turkey and Iran and it is thought by CHOICES (the NGO that deals direct with the IOM) that there is some ethnic/legal problem here. His only option now is to wait for direct flights to open up to Iraq. IOM will contact him when this is up and running and will keep him on their books. Again there are problems with letters going astray as this man has moved from the original accommodation on their documentation when he first applied to IOM and is at present in temporary NASS accommodation under Section 4. A contactable address is crucial as when direct flights to Iraq return, the IOM will need to be able to contact him so that he can return. There is of course an irony here as this man is desperate to return to his wife and children and because of a reason that nobody is prepared to divulge, he cannot return (24 March, 2005)

Another horrendous problem this afternoon where a man who has permanent leave to remain has had his passport lost by the DVLA. Over the past few weeks, checks have been made with the DVLA, the Home Office, and the Post Office. At the moment, the application for a new travel document to replace the one lost is with the Home Office for consideration. God only knows when there will be a decision. I rang the DVLA to see if there could be any communication between themselves and London. She replied that the case is being discussed. It went to this particular team on the 10th at the DVLA. They are due to ring me back (24 May, 2005)

The man I had tried to help arrived again and I spent over an hour trying to contact Birmingham in order to get him an appointment to get his passport stamped that he had exceptional leave to remain, so that he was allowed back into this country after he had visited his sick father in Syria. I had spent at least three hours on this man last week. Because I could not contact the Home Office in Birmingham, I eventually wrote a letter which he sent via recorded delivery. He still was not satisfied though, thus the telephone calls this morning. He is a very determined man and would not take 'enough' from anybody. Apparently he has been round everybody at the centre to help him. He is going to Birmingham tomorrow to queue. I managed to get the directions for him from the voicemail at Birmingham. As a mullah in the Muslim faith, I would have supposed that he could have got some help from one of the mosques in Romantown, but apparently not. This confirms my thinking that there are many divisions within Muslim here.....This man has no-one to go with him and his English is not good so quite rightly he was worried about going to Birmingham on his own. Hamza translated the directions for him to get to Solihull. The office is not far from Solihull station. In the end, I felt quite sorry for him but really we have done all we can for him (5 April, 2005)

The last extract again brings in to question why there was not more support from the local Pakistani Muslim community for a mullah, which again supports findings from Chapter Five, where connections between these two predominantly Muslim groups are infrequent,

suggesting cultural rather than religious differences. As observed in Chapter Five, there is lack of evidence to suggest that the Pakistani community has much connection with asylum groups of any religion or nationality, and that regular contact would have to be managed through agency intervention (statutory and voluntary). Again this evidences complexities that go beyond same religion as dispersal criteria and again undermines policy makers' presumptions about multi-ethnic communities providing more hospitality to refugees and asylum seekers.

As reflected in all these narratives, the advice centre was continually limited in what it could achieve. There were objections that organisations like the Community Voluntary Services (CVS) (as observed by Dr Buller and Mehran from the Persian Cultural Association) who were there to help new organisations start up, were too bureaucratic. Thus they did not provide the financial help that was required to capacity build RCOs, and requests for support always reverted back to the advice centre which had none to give. Zetter et al also noted this, where RCOs in Birmingham managed to acquire small amounts of funding for training, but larger amounts required organisations to have good track records which newly formed RCOs did not have (Zetter et al, 2005). There was also very little monetary assistance afforded to RCOs from organisations like Refugee Action (although they helped with advice). An example of this tension is provided by Mehran who complained that there was a lack of support from CVS, which he saw in racial terms:

CVS, you know CVS is one of the very very strong powerful secondary organizations. We have lots of big problems....I must say they do not do anything for us. Compared to the funding they have, compared to the power they have and the facilities they have, we have had some things from them..... they do nothing and the main thing they don't like immigrants, they never say that, but practically they don't like us and they don't help us.... They help the white communities Everyone is talking about positiveness of CVS and how good it is, and how active it is. It is not true... they are too busy. They don't do anything. Money goes to other groups (Fieldwork interview, 26 January, 2005)

Perceived lack of support from large voluntary organisations (CVS) by RCOs such as the Persian Cultural Association, prompted strong vocal resistance by Mehran to what he referred to as this 'powerful secondary organisation'. As the Refugee Advice Centre proceeded from one funding crisis to another, through a general air of desperation over funding issues, RCOs were left to explore sources of funding, although local council assistance was offered and help came from the Bosnian leader via the Refugee Forum. Frustration over lack of funding has prompted RCO leaders to form their own refugee forum where managing agencies from the statutory and volunteer sectors would be invited, rather than expected, to attend (Fox, 2006). What is clear however, is that the agency of individuals and groups is important, and this extract from my fieldwork diary on Refugee Forum membership reflects this:

<p>There are many very strong characters on this committee. Most have been either freedom fighters or subjected to some form of torture and there emerges this heroic attitude to what they are doing. As a white English person I have to stand back a little and allow people to demonstrate their worth to each other and accept this as the way things are done. It is also a platform to express themselves and to others the importance of their own cause and everyone else's and also the importance of the forum meeting to galvanise and discuss problems (28 June, 2005)</p>

As this extract demonstrates, key individuals are also emerging from the refugee and asylum communities, and they follow faith communities in their modes of competent action, where there has evolved an expectation of resistance to statutory sector directives locally. Btalma,

from the Congo Support Group, is one of the main supporters of this independent forum, although he still infrequently attends the Refugee Forum. He was very keen that RCOs should organise Refugee Week next year (2007) without any intervention from Denton City Council (Denton Refugee Forum, 14 September, 2006). Ultimately, through poor representation, strong RCO involvement in Refugee Week did not materialise (Denton Refugee Forum, 12 July, 2007), which again highlighted the inability of RCOs to capacity build in this way; and suggestions by Dr Buller (and Zetter et al) that RCOs need more funding and capacity building support generally. Greg, the present Chair of the Refugee Forum, suggested that next year the Refugee Advice Centre and Refugee Forum should combine to organise Refugee Week which, for RCOs, would provide the necessary compromise (ibid). It is worthy to note here that Greg as ex director of Denton Racial Equality Council, is highly effective at lobbying the local statutory sector. Greg's support could therefore establish Refugee Week firmly within the auspices of RCO management in Romantown, and funding from Denton council would probably follow.

To summarise, this final section begins to move us away from the more participatory and productive forms of governance being displayed earlier, to one of resistance by the poorly funded voluntary organisations that support asylum seekers. This resistance showed itself through RCOs retreating away from public forums when help was not forthcoming, and the Refugee Advice Centre's ability to circumnavigate powerful agencies such as the Home Office in the interests of its clients. Findings like these married theoretical concepts together, in which resistance could be perceived as competent action where these poorly funded agencies, through resistance, were displaying an understanding of the bureaucratic system and were able to act in appropriate ways to achieve their goals, or at the very least were not compliantly adhering to the dictates of managing agencies (Carter, 1997, Wright, 1994,

Foucault, 1980f). These actions created an intensity of relationships between all sectors across the dispersal landscape.

Research findings from this section increasingly questioned local dispersal management in Romantown, where the Refugee Advice Centre and RCOs were expected to perform crucial functions as conduits for dispersal management, with only limited and inconsistent funding. As a result of poor support, RCOs were resisting agency focus by not attending Refugee Forum meetings and their function as effective inter-agency conduits for service users, was decreasing. Difficulty of access was exacerbated further through Kurdish unwillingness to form a community association. However, the advice centre remained as an eyeglass into this community and others, and the level of support provided by the Kurdish network for its membership, is evident, so policy directives on access and knowledge were achieved in this way. Although the Refugee Advice Centre's funding stream is tentative and far from ideal, it retains flexibility to act in its clients' best interests, and is only answerable to its own remit and not that of funders. A constant stream of volunteers; free food provided by local Christian organizations; and free rent from the Bosnian Centre; means that it can continue on very little. Thus it acts as an indicator of the hospitality and welcome given to asylum seekers and refugees in Romantown, and presents a key factor of good local community governance in which effective action does not always emanate from a solid infrastructure and a well funded agency.

Other important considerations are the ever changing global political situations and its impact at local levels which affect the client base of the Refugee Advice Centre. Many Kurdish are now returning to Iraq, which means that the centre's major client base is getting smaller, creating yet another threat to its closure. Refugee Action also has a temporary presence now in

Romantown, and it will be interesting to observe how and in what form the advice centre survives. As noted, one of its main functions (apart from Section 4 applications), has been to cater for the destitute, and this part of its function will continue. Refugee Action has made it clear that they wish to work with, rather than supersede the Refugee Advice Centre in Romantown, but it probably does not have that choice. Whilst a national government continues to furnish itself with unreliable statistics and ignores issues of destitution, the advice centre will continue to manage issues such as destitution that other agencies like Refugee Action are unable to act upon.

Conclusion

This chapter began by putting Romantown into context within the government's urban regeneration agenda through the creation of the Department for Communities and Local Government and the launch of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion. In line with integration strategies, newly dispersed asylum seekers were to become part of community engagement through the development of the Refugee Community Organisation, and local government was under an obligation to reach out into communities in an effort to access hard to reach groups. These initiatives also incorporated efforts by government to decentralise and devolve governance more to the management of local councils.

These interventions were considered in relation to Romantown and its organisational reaction to dispersal from 2002 onwards. This was assisted through a number of local mappings that had been carried out between 2002-2006 to establish readiness, in the form of existing services

in Romantown for refugees and new arrivals of asylum seekers coming into the area; and pictorially by an influence diagram. At this time, Romantown followed national trends through which regional consortia and local statutory multi-agency forums were being initiated and organised to facilitate dialogue and manage dispersal. However, due to the history of diversity in Romantown, new organisational management of asylum had to merge with existing statutory and voluntary sector agencies formed to assist the settlement of Asian, African Caribbean and other immigrant communities. The existence of this layered form of agency management meant that a voluntary sector refugee forum for refugees and asylum seekers formed easily as a counterpart to the Asylum Seekers Statutory Multi Agency Forum (ASMAF). Refugee community organisations (RCOs) were encouraged to form by both the voluntary and statutory sectors, so that they could represent themselves at both statutory led (ethnic minority) MECAC meetings, in which other faith communities met with the local council; and at the voluntary Refugee Forum, where they played an active part in its management. At this stage, RCOs declined to attend ASMAF, and faith communities were invited but declined attendance at Refugee Forum meetings. The existence of this layered management, already well versed in integration strategies for its immigrant populations, would be perceived as an added bonus, where NASS's main priority was cost effectiveness for dispersed asylum seekers. Another bonus was that Romantown generally was not perceived as disadvantaged, and many agency representatives I interviewed felt it to be a strident multicultural community that was able to mobilise itself quickly.

The main section of this chapter concentrated initially on the effectiveness of management and the bonding between agencies in tackling dispersal into the city. Theoretical support was provided here by Michel Foucault and Susan Wright, to support empirical findings on how multicultural and dispersal has been managed at this local level. Foucault provided the tools to

present the often intense relationships that existed between a more participatory statutory sector, and a well developed local voluntary sector; whilst Wright's observations were used to suggest that competency was being displayed by both sectors to manage dispersal locally. Findings here showed certain key individuals who easily crossed traditional divides between the statutory and voluntary sectors in order to initiate sound dialogue, and to neutralise tensions that arose between indigenous immigrant residents and new dispersals of Iraqi Kurds. These people came from both the statutory and voluntary sectors, from faith communities, and from the refugee and asylum communities; and although lines of communications were not always evident (particularly within the Pakistani and Kurdish communities), networks existed, individuals took charge, and dialogue took place formally and informally to settle disputes. The importance of active individuals within asylum industries has not been widely commented on by scholars and researchers, but this study demonstrates how crucial the individual can be in small scale local worlds. Other large organisations, like Denton University and the university located Multifaith Centre, also helped to encourage the ethos of multiculturalism within the city, and particularly within Romantown; although the Multifaith Centre had to work hard to encourage engagement from the more segregated elements of Romantown which, quite understandably, did not want to move far away from the community. The very active voluntary sector within Romantown, allowed for the Refugee Forum to emerge as a central meeting place quickly and was a site from where RCOs could competently engage. It was the Refugee Advice Centre (with other agencies) that fed the Refugee Forum agenda, and provided the real insight into dispersal, that agencies from both the statutory and voluntary sectors needed to access in order to obtain an accurate reading of asylum dynamics in Romantown.

As a small badly funded charity, the Refugee Advice Centre was not constrained by funders, but was chameleon like in its ability to adapt to any new set of issues presented, and was perceived as a safe haven by its clients. From here the effectiveness of the Kurdish, and other more obscure networks, could be observed as a means of support for the destitute. However, poor funding meant that this pivotal organisation was always in danger of closure. From here the raw aspects of destitution were experienced first hand, where food parcels were given out, and volunteers provided clients with the small amounts of money that they had (often from their own pockets). Lack of funding often bred bad feeling towards other agencies, and volunteers suffered in their attempts to meet the impossible needs of its client base.

The lengthy existence of Romantown as an ethnically diverse community has resulted in advocacy with lobbying becoming the common goal of any immigrant that lives here. The Kurdish community is already following the Pakistani example as many new Kurdish businesses open on Romantown Road. Like the Pakistani community, they have strong community networks, but at the moment they remain fairly low key because of the ambivalence in status of many of its members. As more informal networks develop (for example the new refugee forum), managing agencies may find that they can only reach in so far here and ultimately will have to trust in Romantown's abilities (through its extensive faith, ethnic and refugee and asylum seeker networks) to look after itself.

I would regard Romantown as a competent community in that sound management and an understanding of the bureaucratic system comes from all sectors within it. Agency management strategies from the statutory and voluntary sectors in Romantown, evolved to support its Asian and African Caribbean residents, but these residents have also played an extensive role in supporting themselves. Through a willingness to engage competently in their

own future, an established mode of organic governance has emerged, where refugees and asylum seekers are just a new set of immigrants able to take advantage of what is already in existence here. Although policy has sought to separate and marginalise asylum seekers, strong networks have tempered this marginalisation and enabled them to engage and integrate within Romantown and survive. As Doctor Buller summarises the capabilities of new refugee and asylum groups who come to live in Romantown:

There are examples here in Romantown where communities from particular countries or sharing a common language, come together and use the structure of voluntary organizations as a vehicle to support and help themselves, self help groups, community groups and so on. Going through the process of bringing people together; forming a committee; forming a constitution; applying for funding; getting a base; sharing a base; organizing activities; there is a process there that has been followed on from organisations. There is the Somali Community Support Group shop front. I just think it is amazing. Four or so years from moving into a city, they have their community centre which has been redecorated, refurbished, a constitution, applied to Comic Relief for funding and got it, and were able to meet the criteria they had, and are doing that in spite of all the constraints (Fieldwork interview, 26 October, 2004)

This chapter concludes the empirical sections of this thesis. The conclusion that follows provides an overall analysis of the work, which incorporates the theoretical, policy and empirical findings within the concepts of multicultural, community and governance that have been used.

ROMANTOWN ORGANISATIONAL LANDSCAPE

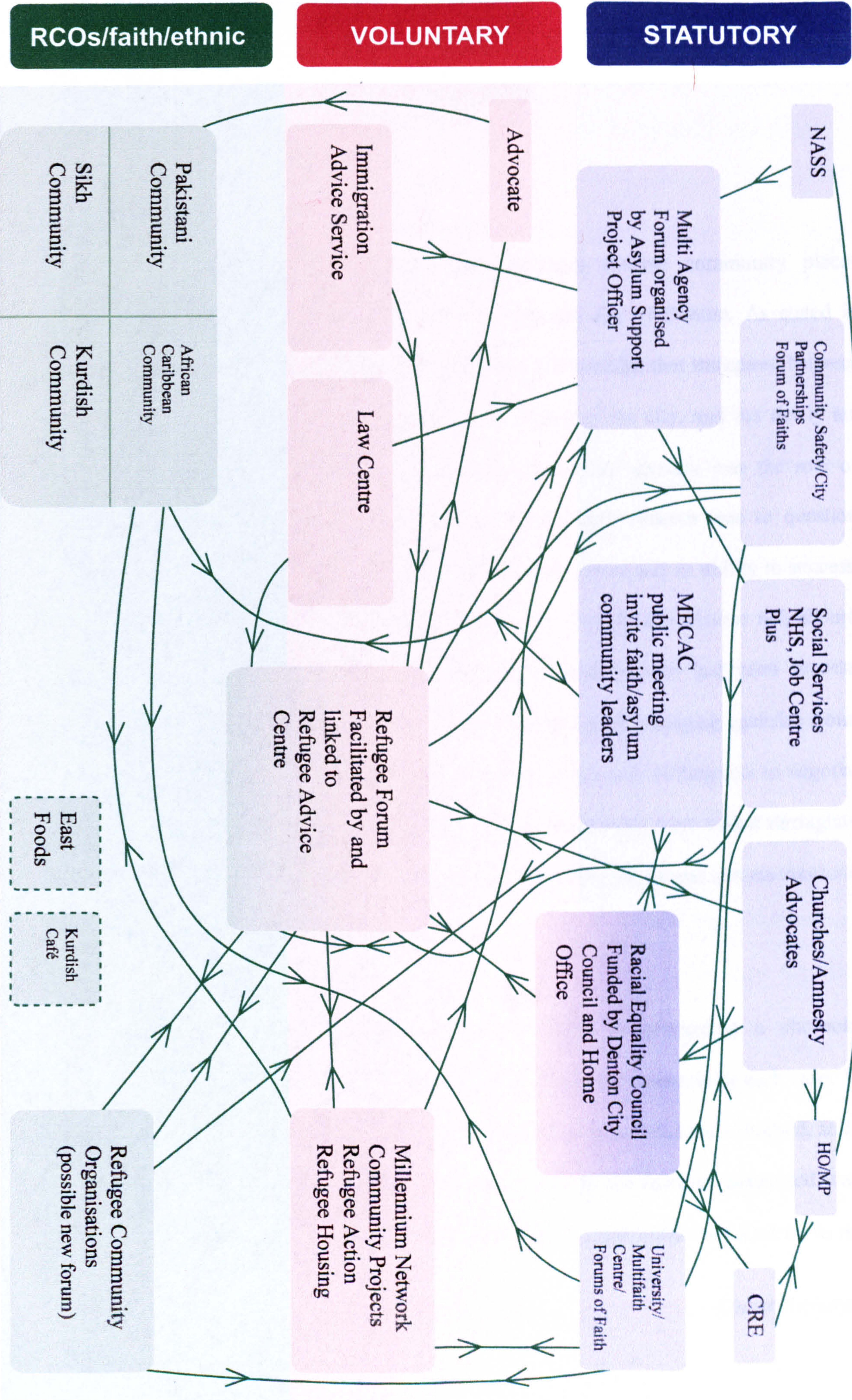


FIG 2

Chapter 7

Conclusion

Introduction

This thesis represents a case study of an ethnically diverse community placement (Romantown) of people seeking asylum in the Midlands city of Denton. As stated in the abstract, the aim of this thesis was to investigate the relationships that transpired between the multi-ethnic settled community in this small urban ward of the city, and the newly arrived population of refugees and asylum seekers. Also taken into account was the role of the managing agencies in this settlement process. The research concern was to question the facility of Romantown's multicultural and community structures and its ability to successfully absorb large numbers of new and diverse groups into this already diverse neighbourhood. Conclusions were formed here that absorption of asylum seekers had been successfully accomplished through a combination of measures, instigated by managing agencies from both the statutory and voluntary sectors, and through a tolerance and willingness to negotiate by local communities and asylum seekers. However certain caveats were raised throughout the thesis where schisms existed between residents and asylum seekers and serious shortcomings existed in the management processes.

This chapter finalises the research process. It begins by presenting a chronological retrospective of the thesis and summarises core arguments and contents in each case. Within this section, points of theory, policy, and concepts used are discussed and critiqued, and some recommendations made. The chapter then focuses on how my research connected with and differed from other research in the field. The thesis finally concludes with a return to my key

research questions in which there will be a short overall summary, some fundamental points raised, and policy recommendations made.

Research retrospective and central findings

The research context and problem

Chapter One placed the dispersal of asylum seekers to Romantown within an historical, global, national and local policy framework. The chapter began with the evolution of a dispersal policy, which formed part of a more general 1960s housing and education policy, where ‘race’ was now becoming an issue and policy was designed to curb the clustering of black immigrants within UK cities. The media also played an influential role at this time and highlighted the perceived dangers of increased black immigration, but it also played a positive role and was influential in aiding the acceptance of refugees from Uganda, Vietnam, and Chile in the 1970s; and Bosnia and Kosovo in the early 1990s. Political management of these refugees had been made easier because of finite numbers and devolution of settlement to intermediary bodies. Thus, a dispersal policy was emerging that was still aimed at the avoidance of clustered immigrant settlement, but also mirrored more humanitarian concerns and focused on the mainstreaming of welfare for refugees, and the allowance for people to settle in groups within areas if they wished.

Unlike the refugee allocations where the UK government was armed with finite numbers to manage, the asylum crisis from the 1990s onwards presented this government with large and uncertain numbers of people, with no prior warnings from humanitarian organisations such as

the UNHCR. The media that had been largely sympathetic to refugee settlement, soon replaced more sympathetic terms of 'war', 'famine', and 'ethnic persecution' with headlines focussing on asylum that included derogatory terms such as 'bogus', 'undeserving', and 'welfare cheats'. As asylum numbers rose, Conservative and New Labour governments were coming under increased pressure to solve what was perceived to be an out of control immigration problem. Unlike the more humanitarian policies that sought to mainstream refugee populations, a more managed migration policy was initiated (primarily by a Conservative government via the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 and inherited by New Labour when it came to power in 1997). Patterns of legislation emerged to support policy tailored towards the needs of the British economy and a separation and restriction of asylum seekers. As Flynn observed: 'this radical change of direction in immigration policy has involved splitting the system of controls into at least two distinct parts.....there is policy concerned with the migration of workers and professionals – so called 'economic' migration...on the other side, the government has taken draconian action to restrict access for people coming to the UK as asylum seekers' (Flynn, 2003, p1).

Sharp increases in asylum applications from 1996 and peaking in 2002 at 103,000 (ONS, 2007) resulted in a continuance of further restrictive legislation towards asylum seekers. The *Fairer, Faster, and Firmer* White Paper (1998) was designed to exhibit a willingness by Britain to accept its quota of asylum applications, but also to appease negative public opinion through efficient management of applications and quick repatriation when people were refused (Flynn, 2003). Within the resultant 1999 Act, dispersal re-emerged as a policy initiative, designed to prevent build up of asylum seekers in London and the south east, with those who required financial support now being dispersed on a no choice basis to local authority areas across the UK, and being managed directly in this endeavour by NASS. The legislation further

sought to marginalise by denying asylum seekers the right to work and providing them with subsistence rather than full welfare in the form of vouchers rather than cash payments.

Visibility had also become a key factor in asylum dispersal management as popular concerns grew. Policy measures were based on a majority of asylum cases only lasting six months, and housing reflected this, being based on availability rather than suitability. Bad policy decisions prompted humanitarian organisations such as the Refugee Council to question policies that dispersed people to socially deprived neighbourhoods, where a rise in local tensions had been the result, in some cases with tragic consequences. So *suitability* of placement (as well as visibility) was also becoming an issue.

Elements of settlement and dispersal by NASS in certain cases contravened recommendations by government watchdogs such as the Audit Commission on criteria for dispersal areas which included multicultural neighbourhoods with existing asylum seeker networks. Flynn (2003) also reported polls by MORI that showed anxieties over asylum to be more acute within towns and cities where immigration was low and obversely, ethnically diverse areas showed less concerns over dispersal. Not wishing to base findings on opinion surveys, he suggested that New Labour's management of its immigration policy should include a whole programme of research, part of which would be to understand ethnically diverse communities and how they cohere, of which this thesis forms part (*ibid*).

Clustering of immigrants within the inner city, now potentially presented the acceptable face of multiculturalism generally as many residents were immigrants themselves. However, large scale dispersal of asylum seekers to these areas was being perceived as unwise, and issues surrounding the advisability of immigrant clustering were again being raised. Home Office

research findings, on the integration of refugees and asylum seekers, whilst admitting that ethnically diverse areas were more likely to provide comfort and support for asylum seekers, were now questioning the impact of increased ethnic concentration on social cohesion. Although the multicultural inner city provided many of the recommended criteria for dispersal put forward by the Audit Commission, there were other perceived drawbacks. These were: isolation from mainstream society; perceived increased expense; and ironically, increased (rather than reduced) visibility where popular fears were that numbers within ethnically diverse communities were greater than they actually were. However, the obverse could be that withdrawal of ethnic minorities and potentially asylum settlement within these communities, from a policy perspective, could give the impression of a controlled and managed immigration and asylum policy, and a place of ultimate spatial acceptance for asylum seekers.

As Chapter One discussed, these general policy shifts towards integration, access and social cohesion in the wake of 9/11 (via the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Commission on Integration and Cohesion) (CIC, 2007), meant a move away from a celebration of diversity (Parekh, 2000, Modood, 1997), towards a policy of integration of existing British born migrant populations; regeneration of stock investment within diverse communities; and social cohesion within the inner city generally (CIC, 2007, ODPM, 2004). It was communities like Romantown with a history of clustered minority ethnic group residential settlement, that had fuelled public debates over the wisdom of increasingly encouraging diverse populations (particularly Pakistani Muslims) to concentrate and segregate, rather than integrate into British mainstream society (Phillips, 2005, Robinson et al, 2003, Cattle et al, 2003, 2002, Parekh, 2000). Settling asylum seekers in Romantown therefore, could be regarded as a sound policy initiative in that asylum seekers would await decisions in a more congenial environment. Alternatively however, this could be perceived as encouraging the

growth of segregated and clustered community settlement with its associated problems (Phillips, 2005, Cantle et al, 2003, 2002). Via these policy initiatives, asylum seekers would also come under scrutiny when local authorities attempted to access these more segregated elements. Cantle et al admitted however, that ethnically diverse communities could provide protected living space for its minority ethnic residents (ibid). Policy decisions on integration and cohesion generally were reactionary and based heavily on tensions that erupted in Burnley and Oldham in 2001. Romantown, although classed as socio economically deprived, had no history of serious racial tension, and on closer inspection, contradicted images of the dystopian, heavily segregated inner city. Settled migrant groups had organised themselves early on to tackle issues of racism, employment, schooling and health (Denton Racial Equality Council, 1987), and these same communities were able to become part of the dialogue process over asylum, so Romantown was able to present positive rather than negative images towards dispersal.

Although this thesis began by *questioning* general policy assumptions on multi ethnic communities and dispersal, Romantown resultantly concurred and contradicted policy thinking at a number of levels. It is its ability however, to maintain a strong community presence that could manage populations of asylum seekers, that has made it an interesting case to study. Through theoretical and policy literature and empirically through fieldwork investigation; community, agency and dispersal dynamics have been scrutinised to examine and present the *particular* nature of social cohesion (in line with Flynn's suggestions), and the community's reactions to dispersals of asylum seekers.

Theoretical preparation

To create a philosophical base for study in Romantown, Chapter Two's theoretical arguments focused on reasons why ethnically diverse areas form; how they cohere; and whether these areas could support asylum seekers. It was argued initially that to avoid conflict with the majority, discriminated immigrant minority groups were prepared to remain within clearly defined communities in which identities remained inscribed and where co-operation with the majority would ensure unhampered living for themselves (Bauman, 1990). Part of this process of reciprocity towards the majority was that new asylum groups would be accepted by the existing minority residents as part of this reciprocal process. There were also indications with this argument however, that confident minority ethnic communities could also *challenge* agencies if there were problems with the new immigrants (Fig 2).

The key concepts of boundaries, multicultural, community and governance were already being introduced at this stage as contested, but useful, concepts for this thesis and continued as such through the chapter and throughout the rest of the thesis. Boundaries were discussed in Barthian terms at the local level in Romantown and contextualised through Wallman's observations in Battersea and Bow. As Chapters One and Two showed, this focus on boundaries led me to explain why they were useful conceptually to understand how they 'work' within an ethnically diverse environment, and to potentially examine how group interaction between residents, agencies and asylum seekers could maintain a tension free environment. Multiculture however, had brought with it ambivalence and a contested set of meanings in respect of immigrant settlement and asylum seeker dispersal. The ethnically diverse community potentially became the arena for conflict and the origin of racialised politics through which rises in tensions became policy justification to impose immigration controls. Thus the multicultural community had become the signifier for crime and deprivation

generally. Stuart Hall's writings on difference in Chapter Two however, helped to illuminate particular points of difference and potential points of tensions within Romantown particularly. The concept of community, like multicultural, was similarly fraught and fought over in terms of its meaning. Again, it became ambivalent as it was a site of togetherness, care, inclusion, social capital and belonging; yet was also perceived as a site of exclusion, competition, hostility and isolation. Therefore, the notion and identification of 'community' (like multicultural) became highly contested when the formation of the ethnically diverse community as a removal mechanism, posed the question as to the resultant form that this community took. Was it the protected space in which difference coexisted harmoniously and new forms of difference were readily accepted; or did it become a place of forced isolation and disillusionment for its minority ethnic residents and asylum seekers alike; or perhaps a combination of both? Chapters One, Two and Three presented governance as a central vehicle for analysing multicultural, organisations and refugee and asylum settlement processes. The process of governance within multi-ethnic Romantown generally fitted in with policy drives towards the devolution of central control to local authorities (Lyons Inquiry, 2006). This was forming part of general policy shifts towards integration and cohesion in the wake of 9/11 (via the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Commission on Integration and Cohesion) (CIC, 2007) where accessing hard to reach groups (including asylum seekers) was forming part of these policy integration strategies within Romantown. Theoretically, Michel Foucault's writings were used to support the participatory and often resistant actions used by agencies in the dispersal process; and analogies by Susan Wright focused on competent and compliant levels of community engagement in which it was suggested that Romantown fell into the competence category, where through processes of negotiation, local residents were engaging and negotiating with managing agencies on dispersal (Carter, 1997, Wright, 1994, Foucault, 1980f). Romantown had a long history of network building and

negotiation in which agency management strategies had formed relatively easily to counter the racialisation of its minority ethnic residents, so these processes could re-emerge easily to challenge problems with Kurdish asylum seekers. Statutory agencies were also coming down from their ivory towers and putting in regular appearances at voluntary Refugee Forum meetings, but also the asylum communities were challenging these hierarchical structures by withdrawing away from the negotiating table (see Fig 2).

Policy literature preparation

In preparation for the case study of Romantown in policy terms, Chapter Three took on the mantle of many of the issues approached in Chapter One and detailed the policy developments around asylum and immigration. The politicisation of 'race' presented certain turning points in UK migration history which began to problematise the clustering of immigrant groups, but this was countered by government committees that were against the heartless fracturing of already established ethnically diverse communities (Cullingworth Committee, 1969). Certainly organisations like the Refugee Council and Audit Commission were advocating more humanitarian aspects of asylum seeker dispersal that allowed for the formation of clusters.

Chapter Three suggested that restrictionist measures to curb asylum seeking generally were ineffectual. The New Labour administration continued to introduce asylum legislation designed to deter, separate and fast track deportations of asylum seekers. Other policy initiatives became even more overt in their intention to reduce and restrict asylum claims and create a visibility of controlled management (*Secure Borders, Safe Haven* White Paper, 2002). Purposely designed accommodation centres formed part of this, where the whole process of screening of claims through to acceptance or repatriation would be managed on one site.

However, proposed rural sites resulted in serious disapproval from local residents and local councils and this led to their eventual disbandment. More draconian measures such as the voucher system were also abolished via the 2002 Act due to increased pressure from humanitarian organisations, where stigma and increased negative visibility towards asylum seekers within dispersal areas were observed as a by-product (*Guardian* 4 October, 2001). It was dispersal away from London (via the 1999 Act) that remained the favoured policy option that brought asylum seekers to Romantown in 2001.

With dispersal however came difficulties and problems. Despite recommendations from the Audit Commission on suitable dispersal areas, poor and misjudged decisions by NASS based on cheap available housing rather than area suitability, had resulted in rising tensions within local communities; poor provision generally; and feelings of isolation for asylum seekers, that often resulting in their drift back to London. Research performed on dispersal communities highlighted a catalogue of issues such as: poor knowledge transference on asylum and immigration (d'Onofrio and Munk, 2003); pernicious racism in predominantly white communities (Goodhall, 2005); the consequences of destitution when appeals failed (Moran, 2003); and poor local management and poor quality housing (Dawson, 2003). There were also incidences of unhelpful local reporting from the media that did not reflect local concerns, but regurgitated populist discourse (Finney and Robinson, 2007, Robinson and Reeve, 2006, ICAR, 2004) In Romantown however, regular local mappings had resulted in good local provision and a locally tailored dispersal management strategy; housing here was relatively cheap; and there were indications of a better response from local communities; and a more holistic agency approach when NASS played a less dominant role. Romantown had managed to retain many of its asylum population, and also inherit many more from other parts of the

country, which was a measure of the quality of placement and also the service it provided.

Therefore Romantown's successes made it an interesting area to study.

Through using an ethnographic approach, Dawson's investigation of Hull also presented interesting localised findings (2002). The methodological approach used here therefore needed to replicate some of these aspects of good research practice, to capture the particular nature of the settlement experience which provided room enough for any unexpected areas of tension and interest to appear.

Therefore, on the basis of theoretical and policy research on the more general aspects of dispersal to ethnically diverse communities, and through empirical investigation of the particular nature of dispersal to Romantown, research questions using an ethnographic approach, aimed to break generalised assumptions on dispersal and multi ethnic communities, and give an in-depth appraisal on the phenomenon of dispersal to Romantown by:

1. Investigating how the local multi-ethnic community of Romantown received and responded to the increasing numbers of asylum seekers dispersed to their community
2. Investigating the abilities of agencies, faith and refugee organizations to manage dispersal and settlement in Romantown.
3. Contributing to debates on policy knowledge around asylum seeker dispersal in a local context.

To determine examples of interest and tension, the thesis raised three key research question areas:

1. Do ethnically diverse communities like Romantown make better dispersal sites for asylum seekers?
2. What are the particular social and cultural dynamics that exist within this community in relation to asylum seeker dispersal?
3. How and in what ways have the range of agencies (statutory, voluntary, faith/refugee based) in Romantown engaged in the governance of multiculturalism and asylum seeker integration?

Methodology

To accomplish this, Chapter Four presented a research design flexible enough to capture the dispersal experiences in Romantown. With such strong possibilities for localised tension in asylum settlement areas, I argued that there was the need to understand the particular dynamics that community and agency organisations played in dispersal here, focussing within the current policy arena of community cohesion generally. There were common elements with other research projects, examples being Moran's studies on the Kurdish destitute in Salford (2003), but 'destitution' and 'dispersal' as issues within Romantown, within an interpretivist tradition, were unique to the community, and in this instance, their impact was to be perceived through local rather than general eyes, where my research was also distinguished through me being a local resident of Romantown.

This highly localised approach therefore, was preferred to the formulation of general integration strategies via large scale government quantitative and qualitative studies which I

felt were too broad based to pick up the minutia required for a successful study on dispersal and community cohesion. Resultant data from this approach represented in Chapters Five and Six would provide the key localised findings that I wanted.

To temper problems of over involvement and feelings of being overwhelmed due to my own proximity and involvement with the field, the thesis used three types of method to ensure rigour, and multiple routes into the use of case study were explored as comparison. The semi structure of the interview question schedule was appropriate for respondents (mainly gatekeepers in this instance), and allowed them to take the line of least resistance, and for me to remain open to new evidence rather than rigidly keep to a fixed schedule. My insider position and my own understanding of local issues enabled me to select respondents via recommendation through my own family connections and collegiate links with the local university. Local knowledge also helped in building a rapport with the respondents which aided the conversation to flow. Focus group schedules were designed in a similar vein. Care was taken to ensure that respondents (both interview and focus group) felt comfortable and safe in their surroundings, and that they felt free to confide. My position, as resident, helped and hindered in the recruitment of the focus groups. Three of my neighbours originally asked to participate, were ultimately unwilling to do so. This could have indicated negativity about dispersal and settlement, but also my own proximity to them. Other neighbours agreed to take part however. My role as volunteer within the Refugee Advice Centre did allow me ready access to Kurdish and other asylum seeker respondents where generally, within this agency, volunteers were trusted. Another added advantage was my own familial relationship to the Pakistani community through my daughter's marriage, which certainly helped with access to interview and focus group respondents.

The six month participant observation from within the Refugee Advice Centre provided particular insights to dispersal from a poorly funded agency perspective. From here I observed the effects of destitution and informal networking. Although I found leaving difficult, I still take minutes at Refugee Forum meetings and this has helped to keep my research current and has also helped the Forum. Through continued attendance at these meetings, I remain an accepted part of the refugee and asylum dispersal landscape in Romantown.

The challenges of researching diverse groups of participants were also managed through the whole project being presented for university ethical approval.

Competent communities: hospitality and hostility

The strong empirical base of Chapters Five and Six finalised the research process in this thesis by providing a localised picture of events which this thesis sought to provide. The codes that evolved from the data resulted in these chapters being split along similar lines, looking at the positive and negative aspects of dispersal. In contrast, Chapter Five concentrated on resident responses and Chapter Six on management agency response. Certain aspects of this empirical investigation married with theoretical and policy assumptions but others differed, thus providing the localised study I wanted.

Chapter Five initially presented a community that was similar to other multicultural communities, in that increased migration and white movement to other parts of the city resulted in Romantown becoming a local ethnic marker for difference within the city of Denton.

However, in contradiction to often dystopian images of the poverty ridden inner city, Romantown presented a cohesive community based on resident co-operation. Sikhs and Pakistani residents (who both referred to themselves as Punjabis), based community living on alliances and preservation of community. Data provided evidence of linkages between groups during racial attacks in the 1980s, and collaborations at community level over issues of mutual interest. Although early writings by local ethnic historian H W Bains, tended to suggest a Sikh separation away from Pakistani and African Caribbean residents (1968), empirical data tended to reflect the opposite. Co-operation was evident, but data also suggested that community markers remained in place. Therefore in Barthian terms, collaborations took place, healthy coexistence was maintained, but cultural identities were not compromised (Barth, 1969).

Together with alliances and co-operation, other elements of positive community living were presented by old and new residents. There were examples of a white Muslim convert who felt safe to pursue her religion; an African Caribbean woman who liked the closeness of village life but also wanted to give her son the benefit of multicultural living; and a long term white resident who felt that Romantown provided the spatial freedom to mix or not as she chose.

However, in line with policy concerns on dispersal and the research questions of this thesis, what was the degree of comfortableness afforded to asylum seekers by the culturally diverse community of Romantown? Chapter Five used the fieldwork data to discuss the somewhat ambivalent findings, which can be summarised as: showing hospitality and empathy on the one hand but also hostility and suspicion on the other. The Chapter showed however, that even though there had been rifts with new asylum groups, tensions tended to be played down by local minority ethnic residents. My Sikh respondent, although grateful for help from the local police to quell tensions, made a strong point about people generally making efforts to get

along in Romantown. Equally, although initially there had been physical fights between young male Pakistanis and Kurds, there were examples of firm friendships and a building of understanding of the asylum predicament. The Pakistani respondent tended to express a view that Romantown enabled those who worked hard and status would not necessarily be a barrier for them and this was substantiated by his Kurdish friend. There were also common elements of understanding towards asylum seekers by second generation immigrant residents as it was felt asylum seekers would ultimately be accepted as they too had been. Newer residents also appreciated multicultural living and the freedom it gave them and felt that asylum seekers formed part of this.

Kurdish responses to settlement in Romantown were a bit more cautious. They indicated that their own informal networks had played a dominant role, plus the small size and multicultural nature of Romantown had aided integration. Findings from Robinson and Reeve's research (2006) substantiated this by suggesting the existence of asylum networks rather than salubrious neighbourhoods was the main driver to successful settlement. There was a reference to help from the Pakistani community, and requests from the Secretary of the Pakistani Community Centre (reported in the *Daily Mail*) that his community members should remember their own experiences of settlement initially. Thus there was some demonstration of sympathy here and common understanding, although there was also reflected concern over Kurdish behaviour (3 January, 2004). There was a willingness to reciprocate by the Kurdish community however, and respondents reported that many had put their initial unwelcome behaviour behind them.

Other asylum groups had chosen to keep their heads down and work if they were able in order to survive. There were ambiguities amongst certain Iranian Christian convert groups who

misread local dynamics in Romantown, and whose aim was to integrate with white Christian populations. This led to disappointments and tensions when they were regarded as turncoats by Muslim Pakistanis. Examples like these presented unexpected and interesting tension points.

External influences such as the impact of the media on communities and dispersal were ambiguous. It was generally observed (by agency respondents), that tensions erupted in Romantown because of local, rather than popular issues over asylum, which tended to indicate an emphasis on locality. The national and local media (initially) were not helpful in quelling potentially explosive events, commented on by Finney and Robinson (2007), Robinson and Reeve (2006) and ICAR (2004). Specific issues regarding Kurdish approaches to Pakistani and Sikh women arose which affected both communities, indicating a reflection of local concerns by the national media, although references were fleeting. The content was generally clouded by explosive headlines, and Romantown was presented through the popular lens as a poor multicultural area rather than a vibrant multicultural community, that helped to strengthen popular discourse on inner city slumdom rather than promote local ones on diversity and community pride.

The local media did focus more on local issues, the main event being a surgery that was transferred away from local residents to provide for asylum seekers, but headlines were still unhelpful and unrepresentative. More recent headlines were supportive however (*Denton Evening Telegraph*, 22 April, 2005), in that words such as ‘home’ were used in its headline, which focused on reasons for asylum flight to the UK and asylum seeker experiences of living in Romantown. So there were examples of good as well as bad reporting.

Policy and humanitarian assumptions about the conductivity of ethnically diverse communities and dispersal began to be challenged in the final section of Chapter Five. The fracturing of these older minority ethnic communities meant that historical collaborations that had been strong in the past were starting to crack as Sikh communities moved out and the less expansive Pakistani community remained behind. Pakistani respondents suggested that rifts with Sikhs had emerged due to adverse reporting on Muslims generally through the media. Although there were a few examples of friendships with Kurdish asylum seekers (as noted), the traditional aspects of community have been harder to translate to new asylum groups dispersed here who bore no cultural links with existing Asian Punjabi residents, although other elements such as common bonds as migrants, and cultural and residential freedom had a more positive effect. Examples of material support for asylum seekers were limited and help for Kurdish asylum seekers from Muslim (Pakistani) residents was not forthcoming. The Imam I spoke with suggested that any charitable donations by the Pakistani Muslim community were mainly targeted abroad to places like Kashmir, rather than given locally to asylum seekers. Kurdish asylum seekers were also not being encouraged to attend the larger mosques by the Pakistani elders, although my Pakistani respondent admitted that there were difficulties between Pakistani elders and youth generally, and that this reflected out towards young Kurdish asylum seekers. The Sikh community however did provide hot meals, as did a local multicultural centre, and free food and toiletries were given out from the Refugee Advice Centre.

Pakistani residents still managed to retain a position of hierarchical prominence in Romantown and generally there was a reticence to share their community with Kurdish asylum seekers although they exhibited a tolerant attitude, I feel. Agency intervention provided an added dimension to dispersal management, designed to ensure that interaction between asylum

seekers and residents regularly took place, and that any areas of tension were investigated and managed.

Research findings in this section

These can be summarised as follows:

Romantown presented itself as a strong competent community in line with Wright's observations (1994), where immigrant residents collaborated in appropriate ways in pursuit of their rights and interests. This commitment to community by its immigrant residents had been forged on alliances and co-operations during unsettled times. Community mindedness was expressed by newer residents and, to a limited extent, asylum seekers. However, dynamics were changing as older immigrant groups moved out and the less expansive Pakistani community that remained behind were not always ready, willing and able to support Muslim asylum seekers; and expected help from these residents was not forthcoming. Kurdish support mainly came from its own informal network. Any antipathy from local residents however was locally focussed rather than mirroring populist antipathy towards asylum seekers.

Agency, governance and management of local multicultural

Chapter Six provided a counter balance to Chapter Five, where the focus was on Romantown in relation to local agency networks and governance that sought to encapsulate dispersal locally; access asylum seekers; and ensure continued community dialogue. Local government was supported in this through policy drives towards a localised managed migration of 'new minorities' of which asylum seekers formed part, but also relied upon participation by the voluntary sector that included faith communities and refugee community organisations (RCOs).

There was an air of complex management here both from organisations and individuals. The role of faith community participation in civic renewal had been flagged up by Lowndes and Chapman (2005). In Romantown participation with other agencies manifested itself by the local policy and organisational landscape being extremely 'busy' (see Fig 2). Because of Romantown's history of network building by its migrant communities, and ability to negotiate with managing agencies, government policy initiatives to devolve decision making to localities suited Romantown well, where dispersal management at other sites had not been so successful (Hull). Romantown proved itself to be a competent community in which many residents and faith community representatives were well versed in speaking publicly, and had a commitment to dialogue at council committees where grievances with new asylum groups were discussed and managed. Local consortia were convened to manage asylum dispersal which was organised quickly, and although there was a lack of Refugee Action presence in the city, agencies such as the Refugee Advice Centre had emerged to fill a perceived gap in services. Regular and numerous mappings of local services, via the statutory and voluntary sectors and the local university, also attempted to ensure up to date provision. Key representatives from all sectors managed to engage in dialogue and cross agency lines of demarcation easily. The existence of a powerful and representative voluntary sector was also aided by strong intellectual input from the local university and the Lottery funded Multifaith Centre. Although formal representations to both the Sikh and Pakistani communities on asylum issues, was mainly through council run public meetings and via directed Community Safety Partnerships, there were also more informal approaches between faith community leaders and asylum groups at conferences, and asylum and refugee groups had requested help with integration from their new neighbours.

However, there were ambiguities as to how much co-operation there actually was from the faith communities. The Sikh community seemed to be more co-operative publicly, and my Sikh respondent quoted accounts of meetings with the police and attendance at local council meetings to discuss any problems that emerged. Negotiations with the Pakistani community were more clouded, although the local Imam confirmed the existence of informal links between Sikh and Pakistani elders and formal Pakistani co-operation at council level. Christian organisations (collectively through the Refugee Advice Centre) were more overt in their support of asylum seekers, and have played key roles in caring and advocating for asylum populations. There has also been active representation from organisations such as Amnesty International. However, only a few of these lobbyists were actually Romantown residents and so did not have the social investment of their Sikh and Pakistani counterparts.

Refugee community organisations (RCO), like faith communities, were quite well established in Romantown, and there existed the facility for them to meet regularly with agencies through the Refugee Forum. Zetter et al (2005) observed that these organisations were crucial to meeting the welfare needs of their respective communities and to provide a bridging mechanism for managing agencies to access hard to reach groups. However these RCOs in Romantown were now facing severe financial hardships (also generally observed by Zetter et al), and the burden of responsibility for many was becoming too great (noted by the local university respondent), when start up funding had run out; continued funding was not forthcoming; and the Refugee Advice Centre and Forum were in no position to financially assist. These unrealistic expectations levelled on RCOs had meant that many were withdrawing from the Refugee Forum and attempting to create their own forum in which managing agencies would only be invited to attend. Ironically, placement within Romantown

had presented a cloak of invisibility for asylum seekers, yet this invisibility and retreat was now making local agency access difficult.

On closer inspection, other problems were also apparent. Although agency management in Romantown presented an aura of competence, the more informal face of the Refugee Advice Centre illuminated the uncompromising problems of destitution that volunteers and clients were experiencing on a daily basis. This badly funded centre, like its clientele, remained very much on the margins of existence due to insufficient agency support and no regular funding stream. This small charity and its attachment to the Refugee Forum had become the hub between officialdom and destitution, and more than any other organisation carried the overbearing load of responsibility for most Section 4 applicants and destitute asylum seekers in Romantown. It also provided agencies with more accurate asylum figures locally. From here however, the effectiveness of an informal Kurdish network could be observed, although generally Kurds were reticent to be represented at Refugee Forum meetings. From an agency perspective, this refusal to engage would be regarded as problematic, although the network was very supportive. Further research on Kurdish networks would therefore be appropriate to gauge their supportiveness. Other asylum seekers who had not benefitted from strong networks and RCO membership, drifted away from Romantown to other centres where there was more support, so the existence of networks formal or otherwise was conducive to successful dispersal.

The Refugee Advice Centre continued to function within the grey areas of asylum seeker management in Romantown, but was in constant danger of closure. Refugee Action now has a paid caseworker in Denton, so it will be interesting to see in what way the Refugee Advice Centre remains central to dispersal management. However it may be that Refugee Action's

Home Office funding diminishes its ability to provide for the hard to reach groups that its poorly funded relation is able to, so more appropriate and imaginative funding streams may need to be found for this type of pivotal agency to continue.

Research findings in this section

Romantown, presented a localised and busy landscape of organisational response that was flexible in its delivery of local dispersal management. Statutory sectors were participatory in their attempts at access, but well developed voluntary sectors were able to resist when agencies were perceived in failing in their duty of care. However, key individuals worked across sector boundaries to carry good management practices forward. Local support for asylum seekers was not purely reliant on visibly formed RCOs, an example of this being the informal support provided by the Kurdish network. However, too much responsibility was placed on poorly funded agencies like RCOs and the Refugee Advice Centre, which created hardship for these pivotal agencies, though did not detract on the service provided.

Wider Policy Relevance of research findings in Romantown

- **A need for a focus on the local** - Chapter Five presented a community based on long established co-operation between immigrant groups, but there was also a strong focus on the retention of ethnic boundaries. Therefore, any policy moves on dispersal and integration within communities like Romantown should understand the importance of particular community dynamics; reflect on the importance of the retention of cultural

identities for some communities; and work to locate indicators of community supportive practices within the accepting communities.

- **A need for small scale qualitative research to be listened to** - Policy should continue to look at newer immigration/settlement to dispersal areas and determine how well those people have settled in.
- **Need to draw attention to informal support networks** - Within the asylum population, indicators of supportive practices within their own communities should be identified and importance stressed on the existence of supportive community networks (visible or otherwise) that can enable any status of asylum seeker.
- **Need for accurate and insightful reporting by the media** - There should be policy drives towards encouraging better local reportage by the national and local media on potentially explosive situations such as asylum seeker placement and community cohesion. Reporting therefore should reflect local issues rather than be a general diatribe.
- **Need for concept of community to be approached with caution** - As multiculturalism expands in Britain, community relations within dispersal communities becomes increasingly difficult to gauge. However accessing hard to read communities must remain as a policy and research priority.

Chapter Six concentrated on the effectiveness of dispersal management in Romantown where:

- **Policy drives should concentrate on raising the importance and capabilities of poorly funded RCOs.** The objective here is to provide bridging mechanisms for asylum and refugee populations that agencies require, to maintain access and assist in integration. Again, prior to dispersal, community relations need to be understood.

Agencies such as NASS need to identify strengths within communities and gauge the

competency of local communities to address local issues that affect them directly.

Suggestions here could be to determine where the hub of asylum management exists within a local community.

- **Need to examine how agencies work together** - Competent communities should not lead to complacency by the statutory sector. Care and continued overhaul is needed within a more localised dispersal management structure in which the statutory agencies take a less dominant role. Also the role of community champions who cross agency boundaries easily needs to be promoted. Poorly funded charitable organisations have emerged as lynchpins in Romantown for inter-agency forum discussions on dispersal and local asylum management. The danger here is that lynchpins such as the Refugee Advice Centre are in constant danger of closure. Therefore inventive and imaginative funding streams should be provided to ensure the continuance of this flexible provision for all status of asylum seeker. The statutory agencies must also continue to promote innovative and imaginative practices to maintain dialogue with faith/resident communities and RCOs to retain local knowledge of their asylum and local populations.

Looking forward, my findings and others in the field

The main aim of this thesis was to perform a singular evaluative study of an ethnically diverse dispersal area, designed to raise particular rather than general concerns within neighbourhoods. Reeve and Robinson (2006) suggested that there was a: 'dearth of explicit evidence regarding the experiences and consequences of new immigration at the neighbourhood level' (p41) which this thesis sought to rectify. Other gaps flagged up by them and managed through this thesis were research on: 'the role of the mediating agencies in managing relations' and 'the significance of interaction and community relations in shaping settlement patterns and informing neighbourhood change' (ibid). Also, on the advisability of clustering of minority ethnic groups within communities, that 'pre existing community cultural networks and minority ethnic-led organisations can prove critical in allowing new immigrants to establish themselves within British society' (ibid, p14). This would concur with my findings to the extent that well established faith communities and formal RCOs, as well as informal refugee and asylum networks, form part of negotiating strategies to quell tensions should they arise. However some asylum seekers in Romantown felt excluded by existing minority ethnic groups, although were supported via RCOs and networks as well as the Refugee Advice Centre and other charities. Thus the existence of faith communities alone is insufficient and their involvement needs to be part of a comprehensive strategic local dispersal management process.

Dawson's research on Hull (2002) as an individual case study like this one, produced interesting findings when tensions existed within new asylum seeker groups rather than existing communities, although attempts had been made by managing agencies to coalesce asylum seekers into networks in this mono-cultural area. However, his findings suggested that attempts at good local management were undermined through NASS's concentration on cheap

available housing and this concurred with observations by Robinson et al (2003). Findings in Romantown however, suggested that cheap housing was not necessarily a determinant for quality dispersal, but good networks were (also found by Robinson and Reeve) (2006). Dawson suggested that networks were reasons for people remaining in Hull (like Romantown), but that tensions had resulted in drift to other cities. Romantown (like Hull) had problems with young male Kurds congregating within the community, but here dialogue took place with local minority ethnic residents (via faith community representation) whom they had particularly upset, and tensions were quelled. Also in Romantown, community in-fighting had been curbed through a willingness of the Kurds to integrate and settle. Dawson also stated that Hull lacked experience in local management of immigrant populations generally which Romantown did not (ibid). He pointed to a lack of information on dispersal and settlement which was also found by d'Onofrio and Monk (2003) and Robinson (1998). However this was overcome in Romantown via integrative agency strategies. Generally in Romantown, information was able to filter down to asylum seekers via RCO representation at Refugee Forum meetings and through visibly formed associations, and information was disseminated to faith communities via council and CSP meetings. However, access to the Kurdish community was more difficult where they were reluctant to attend meetings generally, although as noted, discussions had taken place and they still retain a constant presence at the Refugee Advice Centre. Dawson also found that quality of housing provision differed between the public and private sphere where private landlords often provided substandard accommodation. In Romantown, the Refugee Advice Centre managed Section 4 accommodation and they dealt with private housing providers directly, which helped to circumvent potential problems and involved NASS less.

Robinson and Reeve also felt that media reporting could fuel tensions, and they commented: ‘media reporting of immigration and asylum issues is often inaccurate and unbalanced, giving prominence to crimes perpetrated by asylum seekers and refugees, while neglecting to report the far more common incidence of crimes against new immigrants’ (Robinson and Reeve, 2006, p23). Findings on unsympathetic media reporting by Finney and Robinson (2007) found mixed examples locally, but promoted opportunities for local news to reinvent the national where: ‘the positive discourse evident in Cardiff has political potential to shift the national and international lens on asylum and immigration from one of control and defence to one of opportunity and humanitarianism’ (ibid, p22). My own findings on media reporting in Romantown had also been mixed in that national and local reporting had been similar in its use of stereotypical headline and language about asylum seekers, but more recent local reporting had reflected positive aspects to local multiculturalism and asylum seeker integration in Romantown, and in line with Finney and Robinson’s findings, more of this type of reporting would be advocated.

The ethnographic approach to my research of Romantown has resulted in an in-depth investigation of community dynamics and dispersal within a dispersal policy arena in which policy assumptions on settlement have already been made. My thesis has presented the opportunity to highlight good practice but has also flagged up elements for potential concern, both of which can inform policy and be passed on to other dispersal community areas.

Conclusion

It seems sensible here to return to the research questions that this thesis focussed on, which were:

1. Do ethnically diverse communities like Romantown make better dispersal sites for asylum seekers?
2. What are the particular social and cultural dynamics that exist within this community in relation to asylum seeker dispersal?
3. How and in what ways have the range of agencies (statutory, voluntary, faith/refugee based) in Romantown engaged in the governance of multiculturalism and asylum seeker integration?

To answer these questions briefly, I have approached the last two questions first: in the context of residents and community, strong historical and geographical links had created bases for co-operation and negotiation between the predominant faith community groups themselves, and agencies from the statutory and the voluntary sectors within Romantown early on. This enabled early discussion with agencies on problems with Kurdish asylum seekers when they arose. Good governance rather than welcome therefore suggested limits to this 'welcoming' community – for example there were few examples of friendships from predominant Muslim communities, and material support from these Muslim residents was not forthcoming to Muslim asylum seekers. Kurdish and other asylum seekers were left to rely on their own support mechanisms, although it was felt by my Pakistani respondent, that the community itself was also able to support and facilitate their livelihood irrespective of status.

Secondly, energetic agency monitoring was also required to prevent the stagnation of dialogue, as dynamics changed within the community. The existence of refugee networks was

also paramount to successful dispersal whether through more formalised associations or informal networks. The danger with the latter was that managing agencies had difficulties in gauging community dynamics if these asylum seeker networks were less visible. There is no doubt that a more personalised form of asylum management has evolved in Romantown. It is the precarious (although flexible) nature of the Refugee Advice Centre that causes concern however. Should this agency close, there will be even less provision for destitute asylum seekers whose major support mechanism would revert back to that of their own particular community network, the effectiveness of which is difficult to measure.

Romantown presents a community of accommodation that can *facilitate* asylum seekers' integration and this can extend to points of acceptance or rejection. What community residents can provide is not necessarily the hand of friendship, but an empathetic understanding of discrimination and migration histories that seeks to override the most tension creating situations and subsequently allow space and time for its new immigrant population to settle. What makes Romantown special is a sense of community in which practiced co-operation is a feature that has developed over many years. However these practices of co-operation have been contingent on a range of statutory, voluntary, faith and refugee organisations and at times on the work of committed individuals as Figure 2 demonstrates.

As my young Pakistani respondent commented on the new dispersal migrants:

I think the people in Romantown do a lot better than the people outside. Honestly, ask my brother. I have seen Kurdish people coming to this country, I know a lot of Kurdish lads yeh, and they are doing so well for themselves; they are opening businesses, driving decent cars, even in the process of buying a house. They settle down, have got children. You know having one or two children and supporting a wife is not cheap, it is not easy, you have to be obviously doing well to do that and it is happening, it's happening honestly (Fieldwork interview, 27 February, 2005)

Migration to Romantown continues. There are now over 3,000 Polish migrant workers here plus Romanian and Bulgarian workers due to arrive in the area next year. Already the newly formed Eastern European Association is mobilising itself to ensure that these workers are aware of their rights.

Polish WWII immigrants were able to live alongside Sikh and Pakistani immigrants, but as diversity increases in Romantown, will the new tranches of EU workers be able to coexist with existing residents and new asylum and refugee groups, or is this stretching the concept of community too far? And how will local agencies continue to manage this growing diversity? From my own position as resident/researcher it becomes difficult to finalise what is set to continue.

Appendix One

Interview sheet for interviewees

Information Sheet

Date:

PhD Title: A Home of Their Own: A Case Study of an Ethnically Diverse Community and Placement of People Seeking Asylum

Invitation paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. If you would prefer to speak to someone other than the researcher, there is an alternate contact name at the bottom of this sheet. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Thank you for reading this.

What is the purpose of the study

People seeking asylum in the UK and elsewhere have often faced racism by hostile host communities. In response, part of the present government's research agenda is to examine the character of modern ethnically diverse communities to see if the dynamics within these communities could provide a vibrant and empowering place for its residents and asylum seekers alike to live and work.

With this in mind, this project focuses on the ethnically diverse community of Romantown where asylum seekers have been settled in recent years. However settlement here has not been without problems and there have been racial disturbances between predominant groupings and asylum seekers, sufficient enough to have been reported by both the national and local media.

This community will be examined to see how key people involved in asylum issues, interact with each other to solve problems as and when they arise. It is hoped that by understanding how this community copes on a daily basis, examples of good practice in Romantown could be replicated elsewhere.

This is a three year study.

Why have I been chosen

You have been chosen for interview because you are considered a key member of this community who deals with issues surrounding asylum on a daily basis.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take

part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw at any time, or a decision not to take part, will not affect the consideration you receive and any data collected on you will be destroyed.

What will this involve?

The interview will take about an hour at a place of your choosing. The questions are designed to allow for a considered response. The same questions will be asked to all respondents within the study. The investigator would normally audio tape interviews unless you object to this.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

The investigator promises to respect the anonymity and privacy of those who participate in this study. All data recorded will be stored in a secure manner under the requirements of the Data Protection Acts and the investigator will not disclose or submit interview data to third parties. Some extracts maybe used in future publications. However, to further ensure that you are not identified, the investigator will discuss the use of pseudonyms and should the results of the research eventually be published, written permission will be sought from you.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of this research will form part of a PhD thesis. Extracts from the thesis may be presented at conferences and published at a later date.

Who is organizing and funding the research?

This research is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council and is facilitated through the Open University at Milton Keynes.

Who has reviewed this study?

This research has been reviewed by the Research Ethics Committee at the Open University, Milton Keynes.

Contact for further information

Further information on this study can be obtained from the investigator or Dr Sarah Neal at the above address.

Withdrawing from the study

If you wish to withdraw from this study and do not want to contact the investigator, please contact Dr Sarah Neal at the above address.

Thank you very much for taking part in this study.

Researcher: Louise Richards BA (Hons), MA, MSc

Appendix Two

Interview questions for key figures in the community

Questions

Introduction

1. Finding out about your respondent

- Can you describe something about the work that you do?
- What do you see as your role within this community?
- What constraints do you see within this role?
- As a key figure in the community, are you consulted in any way with regard to the settlement of asylum seekers within the community?
- If you are consulted, do you have knowledge of who these people are and where they come from?
- Would you be interested to know where they came from?
- Asylum is a contentious issue in this country, do you perceive any hostilities towards asylum seekers within this community?
- Do you perceive any cultural issues within your role when in contact with asylum seekers?

Boundary Formations

2. How fixed are the social groupings and institutional boundaries within Romantown?

- Who attends your Mosque/Gurdwara/Church? (religious leaders)
- Are asylum seekers encouraged to attend? (religious leaders)
- If someone in the community has a problem with an asylum seeker, would they come direct to you?
- If an asylum seeker had a problem, would they come to you?
- If you had a problem, who would you go to? (asylum seeker)
- On issues such as asylum, would you share concerns with other community leaders? (stat/vol/rel/asy)
- If there were issues, would outside agencies have to become involved? (stat/vol/rel/asylum seekers)

Local perceptions of difference (asylum seekers)

3. How are asylum seekers considered within the community?

- What do you understand by the term 'asylum seeker/refugee'?
- Is there a good overall term?
- Is there any term generally used?
- Do you like the term 'asylum seeker'? (asylum seekers)
- What would you consider the best term for an asylum seeker?

Local perceptions of difference (community)

4. How British is this Community?

- How would you describe your particular community/organization/?
- How do you belong to this community?
- How do you perceive the area of Romantown? (stat/vol/asylum/rel)
- Who lives in this area?
- Do you feel comfortable living in this area? (rel/res/asylum seekers)
- How do people join in with community life?
- Do you feel that generally Romantown would accept asylum seekers more readily because there are many different nationalities and statuses here already?
- How do you feel about this community? (asylum seekers)

The desire to self manage

5. If there is a problem within the community, how is it managed?

- How much can this area include asylum seekers?
- As a community, how would you make room for these people?
- If there was a problem, depending on what it was, how would it be sorted out?
- How are difficulties with asylum seekers managed?
- How are problems with local residents managed? (asylum seekers)

6. Do you feel that the statutory, voluntary sector and the community work well together over asylum issues?

- Do you feel that you can work well with the different agencies and groups involved in asylum? Or do you feel quite isolated when there is a problem? If so, why?
- Do you prefer to sort out problems yourselves?
- Could you give me examples please of when agencies and groups work well together and when they don't?
- Do different national groups of asylum seekers work well together? Can you give me instances of the different groupings working together?

The myth of the ghetto

7. The arrival of asylum seekers may bring increased funding into the area.

- Do you consider this community to be a poor/disadvantaged community?
- How could things be improved?
- What are the benefits of living in this community?
- Do you feel that reasonable facilities are provided for the communities' inhabitants?
- Is there any conflict over resources provided for community inhabitants?
- Do you feel that the settlement of asylum seekers affects resources?
- The arrival of asylum seekers may bring increased funding into the area. This could be used for the general good. What do you think about this?

Testing the hypothesis

8. How do you feel asylum seekers settle into this community?

- Just to summarise, do you feel that generally asylum seekers are welcomed into this community?
- Do you feel welcomed in this community? (asylum seekers)
- (NASS) Do you think that Romantown is a safe community to place asylum seekers? Would you consider it to be better or worse than other communities in the UK in this respect?

9. Could you tell me in what ways you think it is or isn't a safe community environment for asylum seekers?

Appendix Three

Consent Form

Title of Project: A Home of Their Own: A Case Study of an Ethnically Diverse Community and Placement of People Seeking Asylum

Name of Investigator: Louise Richards

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet attached for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions

☐
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason

☐
3. I agree to take part in the above study

☐

..... Name of Participant (print) Date Signature
..... Researcher Date Signature

One copy for the respondent: one copy for the investigator

Appendix Four

On OU letterhead

Information Sheet

PhD Title: A Home of Their Own: A Case Study of an Ethnically Diverse Community and Placement of People Seeking Asylum

Invitation paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. If you would prefer to speak to someone other than the researcher, there is an alternate contact name at the bottom of this sheet. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Thank you for reading this.

What is the purpose of the study

People seeking asylum in the UK and elsewhere have often faced racism by hostile host communities. In response, part of New Labour's research agenda is to examine the character of modern ethnically diverse communities to see if the dynamics within these communities could provide a vibrant and empowering place for its residents and asylum seekers alike to live and work.

With this in mind, this project focuses on the ethnically diverse community of Romantown where asylum seekers have been settled in recent years. However settlement here has not been without problems and there have been racial disturbances between predominant groupings and asylum seekers, sufficient enough to have been reported by both the national and local media.

This community will be examined under the microscope to see how key people, including the asylum seekers themselves, involved in asylum issues interact with each other to solve problems as and when they arise. It is hoped that by understanding how this community copes on a daily basis, examples of good practice in Romantown could be replicated elsewhere.

This is a three year study.

Why have I been chosen

As a new member of this community, it is hoped this meeting will provide the opportunity for you to discuss problems with the investigator and each other.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw at any time, or a decision not to take part, will not affect the consideration you receive and any data collected on you will be destroyed.

What will this involve?

The meeting will take about an hour at the venue below. The questions will be guided by the investigator but you will be free to discuss issues amongst yourselves. The investigator would normally audio tape these meetings unless you object to this.

Where this will take place

This meeting will take place at Denton Refugee Advice Centre on Tuesday 9th August, 2005 at 4pm. Refreshments will be provided.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

The investigator promises to respect the anonymity and privacy of those who participate in this study. All data recorded will be stored in a secure manner under the requirements of the Data Protection Acts and the investigator will not disclose or submit data from this meeting to third parties but some extracts completely anonymised maybe used in future publications. To further anonymity, the investigator will discuss the use of pseudonyms with the respondent and should the results of the research eventually be published, written permission will be sought from those involved.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of this research will form part of a PhD thesis. Extracts from the thesis may be presented at conferences and published at a later date.

Who is organizing and funding the research?

This research is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council and is facilitated through the Open University at Milton Keynes.

Who has reviewed this study?

This research has been reviewed by the Research Ethics Committee at the Open University, Milton Keynes.

Contact for further information

Further information on this study can be obtained from the investigator or Dr Sarah Neal at the above address.

Withdrawing from the study

If you wish to withdraw from this study and do not want to contact the investigator, you can contact Denton Refugee Advice Centre or Dr Sarah Neal at the above address.

Thank you very much for taking part in this study.

Researcher: Louise Richards BA (Hons), MA, MSc

Appendix Five

Questions for asylum seeker focus group
6-8 people, 3 translators (Sorani, Arabic and French), 1-2 hours
Questions

Introduction

Local perceptions of difference (community)

1. What do you appreciate about living here?

Do you feel comfortable living in this area?

How would you describe the area and local community?

2. Access to resources and being part of community life

Are you getting to know people in Romantown?

Have you formed friendships/alliances with these people?

Boundary Formations

3. How fixed are the social groupings and institutional boundaries within Romantown?

Do you have access to healthcare, schools, leisure centres etc.

Do you attend a place of worship? Do you know the local imam or priest?

Would you share any problems you had with other asylum groups, agencies or residents, or would you sort any problems out between yourselves?

Local perceptions of their own difference

4. How are asylum seekers considered within the community?

How do you feel about the term 'asylum seeker'? Do you think there is a better term (immigrant)

Do residents want to know where you come from?

The myth of the ghetto

5. Benefits of living in the community

What do you enjoy about this community?

How do you see yourselves fitting in here?

Do you like living in a multi cultural community?

9. Could you tell me in what ways you think it is or isn't a safe community environment for asylum seekers?

Appendix Six

Questions for residents' focus group, 6-8 people, 1-2 hours Romantown School, Denton

Local perceptions of difference (community)

1. What do you appreciate about living here?

How would you describe the area and community?

Some of you have lived in this area for a long time. Has it changed? Can you tell me how? What has stayed the same?

If you were coming into Romantown for the first time, what would your impressions be?

How would you describe the area and local community?

Would you describe Romantown as a multicultural area? Do people integrate here? Is it friendly?

2. Access to resources and being part of community life

Do you think there is a spirit of community here? Can you give examples? Do you feel part of the community?

Have you formed any friendships/alliances with any of the new and different populations coming into Romantown?

Boundary Formations

3. How fixed are the social groupings and institutional boundaries within Romantown

What are your experiences on local healthcare, schools, leisure centres etc.

Do you attend a community centre, place of worship, working men's club, Asian/women's club? Could you tell me a little about this please.

Can you give me an example of different types of concerns and issues you have. Who or where would you go to with these?

Local perceptions of asylum seeker difference

4. How are asylum seekers considered within the community?

What does the term 'asylum seeker' and 'refugee' mean to you? Does it always have negative connotations?

How are you aware of refugees and asylum seekers in this area? What are your thoughts and feelings on this? What are the connotations for you? Are they always negative? Are there other ways we can speak about them?

5. Could you tell me in what ways you think it is or isn't a safe community environment for asylum seekers?

Do you think that this community is quite welcoming as a community to asylum seekers?
Do you feel they are safer here than other cities?

Do you think it is easy for asylum seekers to fit in and integrate? What do you understand as the process of integration (toleration or exchange)?

Myth of the ghetto

6. Benefits of living in this community

Do you like living in a community like this?

What do you enjoy about this community?

Appendix Seven

Information Sheet

PhD Title: A Home of Their Own: A Case Study of an Ethnically Diverse Community and Placement of People Seeking Asylum

Invitation paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. If you would prefer to speak to someone other than the researcher, there is an alternate contact name at the bottom of this sheet. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Thank you for reading this.

What is the purpose of the study

People seeking asylum in the UK and elsewhere have often faced racism by hostile host communities. In response, part of New Labour's research agenda is to examine the character of modern ethnically diverse communities to see if the dynamics within these communities could provide a vibrant and empowering place for its residents and asylum seekers alike to live and work.

With this in mind, this project focuses on the ethnically diverse community of Romantown where asylum seekers have been settled in recent years. However settlement here has not been without problems and there have been racial disturbances between predominant groupings and asylum seekers, sufficient enough to have been reported by both the national and local media.

This community will be examined under the microscope to see how key people, including the asylum seekers themselves, involved in asylum issues interact with each other to solve problems as and when they arise. It is hoped that by understanding how this community copes on a daily basis, examples of good practice in Romantown could be replicated elsewhere.

This is a three year study.

Why have I been chosen

As a resident member of this community who has shown interest in research carried out by the investigator in the past, this meeting may provide an opportunity to discuss asylum issues with the investigator and each other.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw at any time, or a decision not to take part, will not affect the consideration you receive and any data collected on you will be destroyed.

What will this involve?

The meeting will take about an hour at the venue below. The questions will be guided by the investigator but you will be free to discuss issues amongst yourselves. The investigator would normally audio tape these meetings unless you object to this.

Where this will take place

This meeting will take place at the Library, Romantown School, Romantown Street, on Wednesday 19th October, 2005, time 7-8.30pm.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

The investigator promises to respect the anonymity and privacy of those who participate in this study. All data recorded will be stored in a secure manner under the requirements of the Data Protection Acts and the investigator will not disclose or submit data from this meeting to third parties but some extracts completely anonymised maybe used in future publications. To further anonymity, the investigator will discuss the use of pseudonyms with respondents and should the results of the research eventually be published, written permission will be sought from those involved.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of this research will form part of a PhD thesis. Extracts from the thesis may be presented at conferences and published at a later date.

Who is organizing and funding the research?

This research is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council and is facilitated through the Open University at Milton Keynes.

Who has reviewed this study?

This research has been reviewed by the Research Ethics Committee at the Open University, Milton Keynes.

Contact for further information

Further information on this study can be obtained from the investigator or Dr Sarah Neal at the above address.

Withdrawing from the study

If you wish to withdraw from this study and do not want to contact the investigator, please contact Dr Sarah Neal at the above address.

Thank you very much for taking part in this study.

Researcher: Louise Richards BA (Hons), MA, MSc

References

- Adams, B. N., & Bristow, M. (1979). Ugandan Asian expulsion experiences: rumour and reality. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 14(3), 191-203
- Ager, A., & Strang, A. (2004). The experience of integration: a qualitative study of refugee integration in the local communities of Pollokshaws and Islington. *Home Office Online Report 55/04* <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/rdsolr5504.pdf>
- Ahmed, S. (2000). *Strange Encounters: embodied others in post coloniality*. London: Routledge
- Aldridge, F., & Waddington, S. (2002). Asylum Seekers' Skills and Qualifications Audit Pilot Project. *East Midlands Development Agency's Skills Development Fund (47/100)*. NIACE
- Anie, A., Daniel, N., Tah, C., & Petruckevitch, A. (2005). An exploration of factors affecting the successful dispersal of asylum seekers. *Home Office Online Report 50/05* <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/rdsolr5005.pdf>
- Amit, V., & Rapport, N. (2002). *The Trouble with Community: Anthropological Reflections on Movement, Identity and Collectivity*. London: Pluto
- Anderson, B. (1991/1983). *Imagined Communities*. London and New York: Verso
- Anderson, M. (1993). Studying across difference: Race, class and gender in qualitative research. In J. Stanfield & R. Dennis (Eds.), *Race and Ethnicity in Research Methods* (pp. 39-52). Newbury Park, CA: Sage
- Arnstein, S. (1969). A ladder of citizenship participation. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, 35(4), 216-224
- Atkinson, P. (1981b). *Transition from school to working life*. Unpublished memorandum, Sociological Research Unit, University College, Cardiff
- Audit Commission. (2000c). *Another Country: Implementing Dispersal under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999*. London: Audit Commission
- Back, L. (1996). *New Ethnicities and Urban Culture: racisms and multicultural in young lives*. London: UCL Press
- Bailey, T., Walding, R. (1991). Primary, Secondary, and Enclave Labor Markets: A Training Systems Approach. *American Sociological Review*, 56, 432-445
- Bains, H. W. (1980/1968). *Asians in Denton*. Multicultural Education Centre, Derby
- Bakhtin, M. (1981). *The Dialogic Imagination*. Austin: University of Texas. First published 1935
- Banton, M. (1983). *Racial and ethnic competition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

- Barclay, A., Bowes, A., Ferguson, I., Sim, D., & Valenti, M. with Fard, S. & MacIntosh, S. (2003). *Asylum Seekers in Scotland*. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive for Social Research
- Barth, F. (1966). *Models of Social Organisation*. Occasional Paper No. 23. Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland
- Barth, F. (1969). *Ethnic groups and boundaries*. Boston MA: Little, Brown
- Barth, F. (1970). Introduction. In F. Barth (Ed.), *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference* (pp. 1-22). London: George Allen & Unwin
- Barth, F. (1984). Problems in conceptualizing cultural pluralism, with illustrations from Somar, Oman. In D. Maybury-Lewis (Ed.), *The Prospects for Plural Societies* (pp. 77-87). Proceedings, American Ethnological Society
- Barth, F. (1989). The analysis of culture in complex societies. *Ethnos*, 54, 120-142
- Barth, F. (1996). Ethnic Groups and Boundaries. In J. Hutchinson & A. D. Smith (Eds.), *Ethnicity* (pp. 187). Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Baszanger, I. & Dodier, N. (1997). Ethnography: relating the part to the whole. In D. Silverman, (Ed.), *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice* (pp. 8-23). London: Sage
- Bauman, Z. (1990). *Thinking Sociologically*. Oxford: Blackwell
- Bauman, Z. (1997). The Making and Unmaking of Strangers. In P. Werbner & T. Modood (Eds.), *Debating Cultural Hybridity: Multi-Cultural Identities and the Politics of Anti-Racism*, (pp. 46-57). London: Zed Books Ltd
- BBC News. (2001). *Two Stabbed in Bradford race riots*. 27 May
http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/july/7/newsid_2496000/2496003.stm
- BBC News (2001). *Asylum Seeker sought safe haven*. 14 December
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/1711249.stm>
- BBC News (2002). *Ugandan Asians – successful refugees*. 8 November
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/2399549.stm>
- BBC News. (2003). *Complex truth behind Wrexham riots*. 24 June
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/north_east/3016678.stm
- BBC News. (2003). *Asylum tensions 'fed by rumour'*. 19 December
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/derbyshire/3332879.stm>
- BBC News. (2004). *'Suicidal' man switched to jail*. 20 August
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/3584148.stm>

- BBC News. (2005). *Rural Asylum Centre Plans Dropped*. 11 June
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/4083032.stm
- BBC News (2005). *Community with history of tension*. 23 October
http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/england/west_midlands/4368994.stm
- BBC News. (2005). *New UK Citizenship Testing Starts*. 1 November
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/4391710.stm
- BBC News. (2006). *Reid's year zero approach? Analysis*. 19 July
<http://search.bbc.co.uk/cgi-bin/search/results.pl?scope=all&edition=d&q=Reid%27s+year+zero+approach&go=Search>
- BBC News. (2006). *In full: Ruth Kelly Speech*. 24 August
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/5281572.stm
- BBC News. (2006). *Analysis: The UK ties that bind*. 24 August
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/5280244.stm
- BBC News. (2006). *Conform to our Society says PM*. 8 December
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/6219626.stm
- BBC News. (2006). *Q&A Identity cards planned*. 19 December
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/3127696.stm
- BBC News 24. (2007). *Migrants small economic plus*. 3 January
http://news.bbc.co.uk/nolavconsole/ifs_news/hi/newsid_6220000/newsid_6227300/bb_wm_6227307.stm
- BBC. (2007) *Wanted down Under*. 26 January.
www.bbc.co.uk
- BBC. (2007). *Born Abroad: An immigration map of Britain*
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/spl/hi/uk/05/born_abroad/html/overview.stm
- Beetham, D. (1970). *Transport and Turbans*. London: Oxford University Press
- Ben Tovim, G., Gabriel, J., Law, I., & Stredder, K. (1986). *The Local Politics of Race*. London: Macmillan
- Bevan, V. (1986). *The Development of British Immigration Law*. London: Croom Helm
- Bhabha, H. (1986a). The Other question. In *Literature, Politics and Theory*, London: Methuen
- Bhavnani, K. -K. (1993). Tracing the Contours of Feminist Research and Feminist Objectivity. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 6(2), 95-104

Birmingham Post. (1968). *Speech that has raised a storm*. April 22

Blakely, E. J., & Snyder, M. G. (1997). *Fortress America: Gated Communities in the United States*. Washington DC: Brookings Institute Press

Blanc, M. (1998). Tenants' Participation and Empowerment in Social Housing Improvement Schemes: Myths and Facts in France. *Metropolis Inter Conference: International Conference on Divided Cities and Strategies for Undivided Cities*. Göteborg, Sweden, May 25-26

Blaxter, L., Hughes, C., & Tight, M. (2001). *How to Research*, Buckingham: Open University

Bloch, A. (2002). 'Refugees' opportunities and barriers in employment and training. *Department for Work and Pensions Research Report No. 179*. A report carried out by Goldsmiths College, University of London on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions

Bloch, A., & Schuster, L. (2005). At the extremes of exclusion: Deportation, detention and dispersal. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 28(3), 491-512

Boswell, C. (2001). *Spreading the Cost of Asylum Seekers: A Critical Assessment of Dispersal Policies in Germany and the UK*. Anglo-German Foundation for the Study of Industrial Society

Boswell, C. (2003). The 'external dimension' of EU immigration and asylum policy. *International Affairs*, 79(3), 619-638

Boswell, C. (2003). Burden-Sharing in the European Union: Lessons from the German and UK Experience. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 16(3), 316-335

Boswell, C. (2003). *European Migration Policies in Flux: Changing Patterns of Inclusion and Exclusion*. London: Royal Institute of International Affairs

Bourgois, P. (1995). *In search of respect: selling crack in El Barrio*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Bourgois, P. (2002). Respect at work: 'Going legit': Ethnographic methods and negative stereotyping. In S. Taylor (Ed.) *Ethnographic Research: A Reader* (pp. 15-35). London: Sage

Brixton Guide. (2003). Selling central Brixton to Yuppies: Brixton community under threat from greedy developers. In *Brixton Under Threat*. 23 February

Callinicos, A. (2004). Obituary: The infinite search. In *Socialist Review*. November

Caloz-Tschopp, M. (1997). On the Detention of Aliens: the Impact on Democratic Rights. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 10(2), 165-180

- Cantle, T. (2001). *Community Cohesion: A Report of the Independent Review Team*. London: Home Office
- Cantle, T. (2002). *Building Cohesion: A Report of the Ministerial Group on Public Order*. Community Cohesion Unit. London: Home Office
- Cantle, T. (2003). *A Report of the Independent Review Team*. Community Cohesion Unit. London: Home Office
- Cantle, T. (2004). *The End of Parallel Lives? The Report of the Community Cohesion Panel*. Community Cohesion Panel. London: Home Office
- Cantle, T. (2005). *Community Cohesion: A New Framework for Race and Diversity*. London: Palgrave Macmillan
- Cantle, T., Kaur, D., Athar, M., Dallison, C., Wiggans, A., & Joshua, H. (2006). *Challenging local communities to change Oldham*. Institute of Community Cohesion in Oldham, final report
- Caputo, V. (2000). At 'home' and 'away': reconfiguring the field for late twentieth-century anthropology. In V. Amit, (Ed.), *Constructing the field: ethnographic fieldwork in the contemporary world* (pp. 19-31). London: Routledge
- Carey, M. A. (1995). Issues and applications of focus groups: Introduction. *Journal of Qualitative Health Research*, 5, 413
- Carter, B., Harris, C., & Joshi, S. (1987). The 1951-55 Conservative government and the racialisation of black immigration. *Policy Papers in Ethnic Relations*, No. 11. University of Warwick, Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations
- Carter, B. (1997). Rejecting Truthful Identities: Foucault, 'Race' and Politics. In M. Lloyd, & A. Thacker (Eds.), *The Impact of Michel Foucault on the Social Sciences and Humanities* (pp. 128-146). London: Macmillan
- Casey, R., Coward, S., Fordham, T., Hickman, P., Reeve, K., & Whittle, S. (2004). *The Housing Market Impact on the Presence of Asylum-seekers in NDC Areas*. London: NRU
- Castles, S., & Davidson, A. (2000). *Citizenship and Migration: Globalization and the politics of belonging*. Basingstoke: Palgrave
- Census. (1981). *Social Policy Indicators – analysis of the 1981 Census for Dentonshire*. A. W. Johnson. Dentonshire College of Higher Education
- Census. (1991). *Census Atlas of Dentonshire*
- Chui, L. -F., Knight, D. (1999). How useful are focus groups for obtaining the views of minority groups?. In R. Barbour & J. Kitzinger (Eds.), *Developing focus group research: Politics, theory and practice* (pp. 99-112). London: Sage

- Clements, L. M. (2001). Changing the support system for asylum seekers. *Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law*, 23(2), 173-202
- Cockburn, C. (1994). Play of power: Women, men and equality initiatives in a trade union. In S. Wright (Ed.), *Anthropology of Organisations* (pp. 95-114). London: Routledge
- Cohen, A. P. (1985). *The Symbolic Construction of Community*. London: Routledge
- Cohen, P. & Bains, H. (Eds.). (1988). *Multi racist Britain*. London: Macmillan
- Cohen, S. (1987). *Folk devils and moral panics*, 2nd edition. London: Blackwell
- Commission for Racial Equality and the Citizens Advice Bureau. (2002). *Community Cohesion: Our Responsibility*, Commission for Racial Equality/Citizens Advice Bureau
- Commission on Integration and Cohesion. (2007). *Our Shared Future* www.integrationandcohesion.org.uk
- Community Voluntary Services. (2003). <http://www.dentoncvcs.co.uk/>
- Craig, G., Hutton, S., Wilkinson, M., & Roberts, N. (2003). *Local impacts of asylum seekers, refugees and other migrants*. Report by the University of Hull, funded by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
- Crawley, H. (2005). Evidence on Attitudes to Asylum and Immigration: What We Know, Don't Know and Need to Know. *Centre on Migration, Policy and Society*, Working Paper No. 23, University of Oxford, 2005
- Culley, L., Hudson, N., & Rapport, F. (2007). Using Focus Groups with Minority Ethnic Communities: Researching Infertility in British South Asian Communities. *Qualitative Health Research*, 17(1), 102-111
- Cullingworth Committee. (1969). *Council housing: Purposes, procedures and priorities*. London: HMSO
- Curry, S. (1992). Case Studies. In M. Wuyts (Ed.), Unit 7 of *Research Methods in Financial Economics*. University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies, External Programme, MSc in Financial Economics
- Daily Express. (2003). *Editorial: Give us a real asylum policy*. 17 November
- Daily Mail. (2002). *Asylum Centre plans unveiled*. 14 May 2002
http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/news/news.html?in_article_id=114329&in_page_id=1770
- Daily Mail. (2004). *The New Race Time Bomb*. By Richard Pendlebury. 3 January

- Daily Telegraph. (2005). *Tell the truth about the Lozells riots*. By Theodore Dalrymple. 26 October
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/opinion/main.jhtml?xml=/opinion/2005/10/26/do2604.xml>
- Daly, M. (2003). Governance and Social Policy. *Journal of Social Policy*, 32(1), 113-128
- Daniel, W. W. (1969). *Racial Discrimination in England: Based on the PEP Report*. Harmondsworth: Penguin
- Davis, H. (2004). *Understanding Stuart Hall*. London: Sage
- Dawson, A. (2002). The problem with asylum-seeker dispersal: transitions, structures and myths. *Benefits*, 10(1), 9-14
- Deakin, N. (1969). *Colour Citizenship and British Society*. Oxford: IRR Oxford University Press
- Deakin, N. (1972). *Immigration Issues in British Politics*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Sussex
- Deakin, N. & Cohen, B. (1975). Dispersal and choice: towards a strategy for ethnic minorities in Britain. *Environment and Planning*, 2(2), 193-201
- Dean, D. (1987). Coping with Colonial Immigration, the Cold War and Colonial Policy. *Immigrants and Minorities*, 6(3), 305-334
- Dear, J. (2006). *NUJ: Reinstate Rhetta Moran now*
<http://www.labournet.net/ukunion/0605/rhetta1.html>
- DfES. (2007). *Curriculum Review, Diversity and Citizenship*. DfES
- DG Research (2003) EU Research disproves link between immigration and increased crime. *Migration and Social Integration of Migrants* funded by 4/5th European Framework Programmes of Research, Workshop organized by DG Research with DG Employment and Social Affairs and DG Justice & Home Affairs. Brussels Jan 28-29 2002. Document reference IP/03/380 Citizens and governance in a knowledge-based society
- Denton City Council. (2003). *Recent history of people coming into the City*
- Denton City Council Community Safety Partnership Meeting. (2004). *Establishment of Refugee Resettlement Group*. 10 May
- Denton Community Safety Partnership. (2006). *Developing the Community Cohesion Agenda in Denton, item 9*. Report for MECAC. 8 November
- Denton Council for Racial Equality. (1987-1988). *Minutes*
- Denton Evening Telegraph. (2002). *Asylum Seekers to get own GP*. By Nick Hodgson. 4 September

- Denton Evening Telegraph. (2002). *'Betrayed': anger at surgery plan for refugees*. 4 September
- Denton Evening Telegraph. (2002). *Surgery stays: refugees only*. By Ursula Hudson. 9 September
- Denton Evening Telegraph. (2003). *Anger on Bale Street Surgery Saga*. By Ursula Hudson. 24 February
- Denton Evening Telegraph. (2004). *What a carry on doctors*. By Nick Hodgson. 1 September
- Denton Evening Telegraph. (2005). *'A total flop'*. By Nick Hodgson. 22 April
- Denton Evening Telegraph. (2005). *City set to be home for new batch of asylum seekers*. By Phil Stubbs. 16 November
- Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (1998b). Introduction: entering the field of qualitative research. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues* (pp. 1-34). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
- Department for Communities and Local Government. (2005). *'Preventing Extremism Together' Working Groups*. London: HMSO
- Department for Communities and Local Government. (2006). *Empowering Communities, Improving Housing*. London: HMSO
- Department for Communities and Local Government. (2006). *Strong and Prosperous Communities: the Local Government White Paper*. Cm6939-1. London: HMSO
- Department for Communities and Local Government. (2006). *Managing for diversity: a case study of four local authorities*. London: HMSO
- Department for Communities and Local Government. (2007). *Lyons Inquiry into local government, place shaping: a shared ambition for the future of local government*. By Sir Michael Lyons. London: HMSO
- Derrida, J. (1972). *Positions*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press
- Donmoyer, R. (1990). Generalisability and the single case study. In E. Eisner & A. Peshkin (Eds.), *Qualitative inquiry in education* (pp. 175-200). New York: Teachers College Press
- D'Onofrio, L., & Munk, K. (2003). Understanding the stranger: Interim case study findings. Commissioned by *The Information Centre about asylum and refugees in the UK* (ICAR)
- Douglas, M. (1966). *Purity and Danger*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul

Dublin Convention. (2003). *Dublin II Regulation*. Citizens Information. www.oasis.gov.ie

Duke, K. (1996). Refugee community groups in the UK: the role of the community group in the resettlement process. Paper presented to the British Sociological Association Annual Conference, *World of the Future: Ethnicity, Nationalism and Globalisation*. University of Reading, 1-4 April

Dumper, H., Hutton, C., Lukes, S., Malfait, R., & Scott-Flynn, N. (2006). The Destitution Trap: Asylum's untold story. Report prepared for *Refugee Action*

East Midlands Contract Management Report for EMCARS. (2007). February

Etzioni, A. (2004). Diversity within Unity. *Prospect Magazine*, 96

Evans, J. M. (1983). *Immigration Law*. London: Sweet and Maxwell

Evans, N. (1980). The South Wales Race Riots of 1919. *Llafur*, 3(1), 5-29

Evans, N. (1985). Regulating the Reserve Army: Arabs, Blacks and the local State in Cardiff, 1919-1945. In K. Lunn, (Ed.), *Race and Labour in the Twentieth-Century Britain* (pp. 68-115). London: Frank Cass

Everhart, R. B. (1977). Between stranger and friend: some consequences of 'long term' fieldwork in schools. *American Educational Research Journal*, 14(1), 1-15

Fanon, F. (1986). *Black Skin, White Mask*. London: Pluto Press, first published 1952

Farquhar, C. (1999). Are focus groups suitable for 'sensitive' topics? In R. Barbour & J. Kitzinger, (Eds.), *Developing focus group research: Politics, theory and practice* (pp. 47-63). London: Sage

Fine, M. (1998). Working the Hyphens: Reinventing Self and Other in qualitative research. In N. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln, (Eds.), *The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues* (pp. 70-82). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Finney, N. (2004). *Asylum seeker dispersal: public attitudes and press portrayals around the UK*. PhD thesis, University of Wales, Swansea

Finney, N. & Peach, E. (2004). Attitudes towards asylum seekers, refugees and other immigrants: a literature review for the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE). *Commission for Racial Equality*

Finney, N., & Robinson V. (2007). Local press re-presentation and contestation of national discourses on asylum dispersal. *CCSR Working Paper 2007-01*

Fitzgerald, M. & Layton-Henry, Z. (1986). Opposition Parties and Race Policies: 1979-83. In Z. Layton-Henry & P. Rich, (Eds.), *Race, Government and Politics in Britain*. London: Macmillan

- Flynn, D. (2003). Tough as old boots?: Asylum, Immigration and the paradox of New Labour policy. *Immigration Rights Project, Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants*
- Flynn, D. (2005). New borders, new management: The dilemmas of modern immigration policies. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 28(3), 463-490
- Ford, P. (2005). *Deep roots of Paris riots: President Chirac has called for dialogue after a week of clashes*. Christian Science Monitor. 4 November
www.csmonitor.com/2005/1104/p06s02-woeu.html
- Forrest, R. & Kearns, A. (1999a). *Joined-up Places? Social Cohesion and Regeneration*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation
- Foucault, M. (1977). *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writing 1972-1977*. C. Gordon, (Ed.). London: Harvester Wheatsheaf),
- Foucault, M. (1977a). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. A. Sheridan. Harmondsworth: Penguin
- Foucault, M. (1978). *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction* . trans. A. Sheridan. Harmondsworth: Penguin
- Foucault, M. (1980b). Body/Power. In M. Foucault (1980f) *Michel Foucault: Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, C Gordon, (Ed.). London: Harvester Wheatsheaf
- Foucault, M. (1982). Afterword: The Subject and Power. In H. L. Dreyfus & P. Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (pp. 208-226). London: Harvester Wheatsheaf
- Foucault, M. (1986). Of Other Spaces. *Diacritics*, 16, 22-7
- Fox, S. (2006). Filling the Gaps: Services for Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Derby. Commissioned by *Refugee Action and Refugee Housing Association*
- Freeman, G. (1979). *Immigrant labor and Racial Conflict in Industrial Societies*. Princeton University Press
- Freud, S. (1977). Fetishism. *Sexualities*, Vol 7, Pelican Freud Library. Harmondsworth: Penguin. First published 1927
- Fullerton, M. (1985). The Muslims of Derby. *Society at Work*. 13 September
- Gardner, C. (2006). Can the government manage migration?: A study of UK legislation and policy from 1996-2006. *Centre for Migration, Policy and Society*, Working Paper No. 28, University of Oxford

- Gartner, L. P. (1973). *The Jewish Immigrant in England 1870-1914*. London: Simon Publications
- Glaser, B. & Strauss, A. (1967). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*. Chicago: Aldine
- Glaser, B. (1978). *Theoretical Sensitivity*. San Francisco: Sociology Press
- Glaser, N. (1993). Is assimilation dead? *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 530: 122-36
- Goodhall, C. (2005). *Dealing with Difference: Towards a Model of Successful Relations Between Established Communities and New Arrivals in Stoke on Trent. A New Perspective on the Roots of Ethnic Tension*. Paper presented at the Seeking Refuge, Seeking Rights, Seeking a Future, Forced Migration Students Conference. 13-14 May, Oxford Brookes University
- Goodwin, M. & Painter, J. (1996). *Local governance, the crises of Fordism and the changing geographies of regulation*. Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers): London
- Gordon, C. (Ed.). (1980). *Michel Foucault: Power/Knowledge*. Brighton: Harvester Press
- Gordon, P. (1985). *Policing Immigration: Britain's Internal Controls*. London: Pluto
- Grillo, R. (2005). Backlash Against Diversity? Identity and Cultural Politics in European Cities. *Centre on Migration, Policy and Society*, Working Paper No. 14, University of Oxford
- Guardian. (1996). *A Final Brick in the Wall*. By Hirit Belai. 15 July
<http://politics.guardian.co.uk/homeaffairs/comment/0,,905142,00.html>
- Guardian. (2001). *Trust me on asylum vouchers – Blunkett.*, By Alan Travis. 4 October
<http://politics.guardian.co.uk/labour2001/comment/0,,563072,00.html>
- Guardian. (2002). *Sangatte Refugee Camp*. 23 May
<http://politics.guardian.co.uk/homeaffairs/story/0,,720826,00.html>
- Guardian. (2002). *Blunkett secures early Sangatte closure*. By Danny Penman. 2 December
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/immigration/story/0,,1422085,00.html>
- Guardian. (2004). *UK: Blunkett backs down on aid for asylum seekers*. 26 June
- Guardian. (2005). *Identity and Intolerance*. 4 August
www.guardian.co.uk/print/0,3858,5254548-103683,00.html
- Guardian. (2006). *Whatever happened to Rhetta Moran*. By Anushka Asthana. 12 February
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/immigration/story/0,,1708035,00.html>

- Guardian. (2007). *Comment is free*. B Alice Unwordi. 31 May
http://commentisfree.guardian.co.uk/alice_unwordi/2007/05/labours_leftovers.html
- Guba, E. & Lincoln Y. S. (1989). *Fourth Generation Evaluation*. Newbury: Sage
- Gumperz, J. (Ed.). (1982). *Language and Social Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Gumperz, J. (2001). Interethnic Communication. In M. Wetherell, S. Taylor, S. J. Yates, *Discourse Theory and Practice: A Reader* (pp. 138-149). London: Sage
- Gunaratnam, Y. (2003). *Researching 'Race' and Ethnicity: Methods, Knowledge and Power*. London: Sage
- Halfacree, K. (1993). Out of place in the countryside: travelers and the rural idyll. *Antipode*, 28(1), 42-71
- Hall, S. (1977). Pluralism, race and class in Caribbean society. In UNESCO, *Race and class in post-colonial society* (pp. 150-182). Paris: UNESCO
- Hall, S., Critcher, C., Jefferson, T., Clarke, J., & Roberts, B. (1978). *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order*. London: MacMillan
- Hall, S. (1980). Race, Articulation and Societies Structured in Dominance. In UNESCO (Ed.), *Sociological Theories: Race and Colonialism* (pp. 305-345). Paris: UNESCO
- Hall, S. (1985a). *Gramsci's Relevance to the Analysis of Racism and Ethnicity*. unpublished paper
- Hall, S. (1988). *New ethnicities*. Institute of Contemporary Art
- Hall, S. (1996). The after-life of Frantz Fanon. In A. Read, (Ed.), *The Fact of Blackness: Frantz Fanon and visual representation* (pp. 12-37) Seattle: WA, Bay Press
- Hall, S. (1997). Spectacle of the Other. In S. Hall, (Ed.), *Representations* (pp. 223-279). Sage: London
- Hammersley, M. (1992). So, what are case studies? In M. Hammersley, *What's Wrong with Ethnography?* (pp. 183-200). London: Routledge
- Hammersley, M. & Atkinson, P. (1995). *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*, 2nd edition. London: Routledge
- Hammersley, M. (2003). *Case Study Method: A brief introduction and bibliographical guide*. Open University Ethnography D844
- Hannerz, U. (1980). *Exploring the City: Inquiries Toward an Urban Anthropology*. New York: Columbia University Press

- Harris, C. (1988). Images of Blacks in Britain: 1930-60. In S. Allen & M. Macey (Eds.), *Race and Social Policy* (pp. 48-63). London: ESRC
- Hartmann, E. G. (1948). *The Movement to Americanize the Immigrant*. New York: Columbia University Press
- Hassan, L. (2000). Deterrence Measures and the Preservation of Asylum in the United Kingdom and United States. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 15(2), 184-204
- Hawkins, S. & Fox, H. (2004). *Migrations Home Journeys*. Neighbourhood Involvement Programme
- Hepple, R. (1968). *Race, Jobs and the Law in Britain*. Harmondsworth: Penguin
- HMSO (2003) www.hmso.gov.uk/acts/en2002/02en41-a.htm
- Hey, V. (2002). 'Not as nice as she was supposed to be': schoolgirls' friendships. In S. Taylor (Ed.), *Ethnographic Research: A Reader* (pp. 67-90). London: Sage
- Holmes, C. (1988). *John Bull's Island*. London: Macmillan
- Home Office White Paper. (1998). *Fairer, Faster and Firmer – A modern approach to Immigration and Asylum*, Cm4018. London: HMSO
- Home Office. (1999). *Lawrence Inquiry: report of an inquiry by Sir William McPherson of Cluny*, Cm4262-1. London: HMSO
- Home Office White Paper. (2002). *Secure Borders, Safe Haven: Integration with Diversity in Modern Britain*, Cm5387. London: HMSO
- Home Office. (2003). *Home Office Citizenship Survey*. London: HMSO
- Home Office. (2004b). *Integration Matters: A National Strategy for Refugee Integration*, London: HMSO
- Home Office. (2005). Section 4: Voluntary Returns to Iraq. *Immigration and nationality Directorate letter from Jeremy Oppenheim*. London: HMSO
- Home Office. (2005). *Five Year Strategy for Asylum and Immigration*, Cm 6472. London: HMSO
- House of Commons. (1905). *Aliens Act*
- House of Commons. (1914). *Aliens Restriction Act*
- House of Commons. (1919). *Aliens Restriction Amendment Act*
- House of Commons. (1925). *Special Restrictions (Coloured Alien Seamen) Order*
- House of Commons. (1948). *British Nationality Act*

- House of Commons. (1948). *National Assistance Act*
- House of Commons. (1961). *Commonwealth Immigration Bill*
- House of Commons. (1962). *Commonwealth Immigration Act*
- House of Commons. (1962). *Immigration Act*
- House of Commons. (1965). *Race Relations Act*
- House of Commons. (1968). *Race Relations Act*
- House of Commons. (1969). *Immigration Act*
- House of Commons. (1971). *Immigration Act*
- House of Commons. (1976). *Race Relations Act*
- House of Commons. (1993). *Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act.*
- House of Commons. (1996). *Asylum and Immigration Act.*
- House of Commons. (1998). *Human Rights Act.*
- House of Commons. (1999). *Immigration and Asylum Act.*
- House of Commons. (1999). *Asylum Support (Interim Provisions) Regulation Act.*
- House of Commons. (2000). *Race Relations Act*
- House of Commons. (2002). *Nationality and Immigration Act.*
- House of Commons. (2002). *Asylum Support (Interim Provisions) (Amendment) Regulations.*
- House of Commons. (2003). *Commission Communication: Towards more accessible, equitable and managed asylum systems* www.publications.parliament.uk
- House of Commons. (2004c). *The Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc) Act.*
- House of Commons. (2006). *Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act.*
- Hughes, G. (2007). *The politics of crime and community*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan
- Hurrell, A. (2007). *Community Cohesion in Denton*. Denton Community Safety Partnership
- Hussain, Y. & Bagguley, P. (2005). Citizenship, Ethnicity and Identity: British Pakistanis after the 2001 'Riots'. *Sociology*, 39(3), 407-425

- ICAR. (2003). *Skills audit of asylum seekers and refugees in Southampton*. ICAR/Southampton City Council
- ICAR. (2004). *Media Image, Community Impact: Assessing the Impact of Media and Political Images of Refugees and Asylum Seekers on Community Relations in London*. London: ICAR: Kings College
- ICAR. (2005). *Asylum and Security*, Chatham House. March 27
<http://www.icar.org.uk/?lid=5902>
- Independent (2004). *UK: Blunkett under fire after second asylum-seeker commits suicide*. By Daniel Demetriou. 26 July
<http://news.independent.co.uk/uk/politics/article48972.ece>
- Independent Race and Refugee Network. (2006). *Fighting for the rights of Iranian Asylum Seekers.*, By Tim Cleary. 16 March <http://www.irr.org.uk/2006/march/tc000023.html>
- IPPR. (2001). *Guarded welcome for Blunkett's statement on asylum*. www.ippr.org
- Jacobs, B. (1986). *Black Politics and Urban Crisis in Britain*. Cambridge University Press
- Jeffels, S., Richards, L., & Hill, A. (2005). Consideration of the Case for a Wet Centre to be located in the City of Derby. *Research and Evaluation Services, University of Derby* (research carried out for Derby City Council and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister)
- Jenkins, R. (2003). Rethinking Ethnicity: Identity, Categorization, and Power. In J. Stone, & D. Rutledge (Eds.), *Race and Ethnicity: Comparative and Theoretical Approaches* (pp. 59-71). Oxford: Blackwell
- Jenkinson, J. (1985). The Glasgow Race Disturbances of 1919. In K. Lunn (Ed.), *Hosts, Immigrants and Minorities* (pp. 42-66). Folkstone: Dawson
- Johnson, A. W. (1981). Social Policy Indicators – analysis of the 1981 census for Derbyshire. *Derbyshire College of Higher Education*
- Jones, P. & Evans, J. (2006). Urban Regeneration, Governance and the State: Exploring Notions of Distance and Proximity. *Urban Studies*, 43(9), 1491-1509
- Joshi, S. & Carter, B. (1984). The role of Labour in the creation of a racist Britain. *Race and Class* XXV(3), 53-70
- Joshua, H. & Wallace, T. (1983). *To Ride the Storm: the 1980 Bristol 'Riot' and the State*. London: Heinemann
- Katznelson, I. (1976). *Black Men, White Cities*. University of Chicago Press
- Kent County Constabulary. (2000). *ACPO Guide to Meeting the Policing Needs of Asylum Seekers and Refugees*

- Khan, P. (2003). An analysis of conflict experienced between agencies involved with asylum seekers. *Journal of Social Work Practice*, 17(1), 155-126
- Kitzinger, J. (1994). The methodology of focus groups: The importance of interaction between research participants. *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 16(1), 103-121
- Kitzinger, J. (1995). Qualitative research: Introducing focus groups. *British Medical Journal*, 311, 299-302
- Kohler, D. (1973). Public opinion and the Ugandan Asians. *New Community*, 2(2), 194-197
- Knowles, C. (2000). Here and there: Doing transnational fieldwork. In V. Amit, (Ed.), *Constructing the Field: Ethnographic Fieldwork in the Contemporary World* (pp. 54-70). London: Routledge
- Kundnani, A. (2002). Institute of Race Relations. February 2002. www.politics.co.uk
- Lacan, J. (1977). *Écrits*. London: Tavistock
- Layder, D. (1994) *Understanding Social Theory*. London: Sage
- Layton-Henry, Z. (1984). *The Politics of Race in Britain*. London: Allen & Unwin
- Lemos, G. (2004). *Community Conflict: Causes and Action*. London: Lemos&Crane
- Lenton, J., Budgen, N., & Clarke, K. (1966). *Immigration, Race and Politics: A Birmingham View*. London: Bow Publications
- Lévi-Strauss, C. (1970). *The Raw and the Cooked*. London: Cape
- Lewis, G. (1996). *Living with difference: ethnicity, gender and social work*. PhD thesis: Open University
- Lewis, G. (1998). Welfare and the Social Construction of 'Race'. In E. Saranga (Ed.), *Embodying the Social: Constructions of Difference*. London: Routledge
- Lewis, G. (2000). *'Race', Gender, and Social Welfare: Encounters in a Postcolonial Society*. London: Polity Press
- Lewis, G., & Neal, S. (2005). Introduction: Contemporary political contexts, changing terrains and revisited discourses. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 28(3), 423-444
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E G (1985) *Naturalistic Inquiry*, Beverly Hills: Sage
- Loney, L. (2001). Defending asylum seekers against bigotry. *Regeneration and Renewal*, 24 August, 16-17

- Loughry, M. & Ager, A. (2001). *The Refugee Experience: Psychosocial Training Module*. Oxford University
- Lowndes, V., & Chapman, R. (2005). Faith, hope and clarity: Developing a model of faith group involvement in civil renewal. *Home Office Civil Renewal Research Programme*, De Montfort University
- Lubbers, R. (2002). After September 11: New Challenges to Refugee Protection. *UNHCR*. http://biblioteca.upeace.org/masters/documents/3_6.pdf
- Lunn, K. (1980). *Hosts, Immigrants and Minorities*. Folkestone: Dawson
- Macdonald, I. (1983). *Immigration Law and Practice in the United Kingdom*. London: Butterworths
- Malinowski, B. (1922). *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. London: Routledge
- Marcuse, P. (1996). Of walls and immigrant enclaves. In R. Baubock, and A. Zolberg, (Eds.), *The challenge of diversity: Integration and pluralism in society of immigration*. London: Avebury
- Mason, D., & Rex, J. (Eds.). (1986). *Theories of Ethnic and Race Relations*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- May, R., & Cohen, R. (1974). The Interpretation Between Race and Colonialism: A Case Study of the Liverpool Race Riots of 1919. *Race and Class*, 16(2), 111-126
- McNeill, P. (2003). Public health ethics: asylum seekers and the case for political action. *Bioethics*, 17(5-6), 487-502
- Media Hate Watch. (2003). *Even the Daily Express questions Migration Watch UK's "draconian" policies*. 24 November
<http://www.diversity-online.org/ps1.asp?ItemID=879>
- Messina, T. (1985). Mediating race relations: British Community Relations Councils revisited. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 10(2), 187-202
- Miles, R., & Phizacklea, A. (1984). *Racism and Political Action in Britain*, London: Routledge
- Miller, P., & Rose, N. (2001). The Tavistock Programme: The Government of subjectivity and social life. *Sociology* (1988) 22, 171-192. In M. Wetherell, S. Taylor, & S. J. Yates, *Discourse Theory and Practice: a reader* (pp. 364-379). London: Sage
- Modood, T., Beishon, S., & Virdee, S. (1994). *Changing Ethnic Identities*. London: PSI
- Modood, T., Berthoud, R., Lakey, J., Naazroo, J., Smith, P., Virdee, S., & Beishon, S. (1997). *Ethnic Minorities in Britain: Diversity and Disadvantage*. Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities. London: PSI

Modood, T. (2001). *The Observer*, 30 September

Modood, T. (2005). *Remaking multiculturalism after 7/7*. [www.opendemocracy.net/conflict-terrorism/multiculturalism 2879.jsp](http://www.opendemocracy.net/conflict-terrorism/multiculturalism/2879.jsp)

Moran, R. (2003). From Dispersal to Destitution: dialectical methods in participatory action research with people seeking asylum. *The Revans Institute for Action Learning and Research*, University of Salford, Work in Progress

Moran, R., & Temple, B. (2005). Learning to live together: developing communities with dispersed refugee people seeking asylum. *Joseph Rowntree Foundation*

Morgan, D. (1997). *Focus Groups as Qualitative Research*, 2nd Edition. London: Sage

Morgan, G. (1997). *Images of Organization*. London: Sage

Mortimer, E. (1996). The treatment of refugees and asylum seekers. An essay on the *Ditchley Foundations Conference* held at Ditchley Park, Oxfordshire, 27-29 September 1996

Murray, C. (2001). *Underclass + 10: Charles Murray and the British Underclass 1990 – 2000*. London: CIVITAS

National Audit Office. (2004). *Asylum and Migration: A review of Home Office Statistics* Office of National Statistics. www.ons.gov.uk

Neal, S. (2002). Rural Landscapes, racism and representation: examining multicultural citizenship and policy-making in the English countryside. *Race and Ethnic Studies*, 25(3), 442-461

Neal, S. & Walters, S. (2008). Rural Be/longing and Rural Social Organizations: Conviviality and Community-Making in the English Countryside. *Sociology*, 42, 279

Neumayer, E. (2005). *Asylum recognition rates in Western Europe: their determinants, variation and lack of convergence (online)*. London: LSE Research <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/archives/00000613>

Newman, J. (2007). Rethinking 'the public' in troubled times: unsettling state, nation and the liberal public sphere. *Public Policy and Administration*, 22, 27-47

Newton, K. (1976). *Second City Politics: Democratic Processes and Decision-Making in Birmingham*. Oxford: Clarendon Press

Nicholson, T. (1994). Institution building: Examining the fit between bureaucracies and indigenous systems. In Wright, S (Ed.), *Anthropology of Organizations* (pp. 68-84). London: Routledge

Nottas. (2002). *RAF Newton - Government proposes to use Newton to accommodate up to 750 asylum seekers*. www.nottas.org.uk/morenwton.htm

- Nottas. (2004). *RAF Newton asylum centre is rejected* www.nottas.org.uk/newtonrejected.htm
- O'Brien, K. (1993). Using focus groups to develop health surveys: an example from research on social relations and AIDS-preventative behaviour. *Health Education Quarterly*, 20(3), 361-372
- Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. (2003). *Sustainable Communities in the East Midlands*. ODPM
- Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. (2004). *Empowering communities, improving housing: Involving black and minority ethnic tenants and communities*. ODPM
- Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. (2005). *'Preventing Extremism Together' Working Groups*. ODPM
- Okely, J. (1994). Thinking through fieldwork. In M. Le Voi, A. Green, S. Potter & R. Sapsford, *DTZY840 Introduction to Research: Basic Skills and Survey Methods* (pp. 31-34). Milton Keynes: Open University
- Okely, J. (1996). *Own or Other Culture*, London: Routledge
- ONS. (1999). *The 2001 Census on Population, CM4253*. London: Home Office
- ONS. (2002). *Social Focus in Brief: Ethnicity 2002*. London: Home Office
- ONS. (2003). Asylum Statistics: UK 2003. *Home Office Statistical Bulletin*. 24 August, London: Home Office
- ONS. (2004). Asylum Statistics: 1st Quarter United Kingdom. *Home Office*
- ONS. (2004). Asylum Statistics: 2nd Quarter United Kingdom. *Home Office*
- ONS. (2004). Asylum Statistics: 3rd Quarter United Kingdom. *Home Office*
- ONS. (2004). Asylum Statistics: 4th Quarter United Kingdom. *Home Office*
- ONS. (2005). Asylum Statistics: 1st Quarter United Kingdom. *Home Office*
- ONS. (2005). Asylum Statistics: 2nd Quarter United Kingdom. *Home Office*
- ONS. (2005). Asylum Statistics: 3rd Quarter United Kingdom. *Home Office*
- ONS. (2005). Asylum Statistics: 4th Quarter United Kingdom. *Home Office*
- ONS. (2006). Neighbourhood Statistics. Deprivation. *Home Office*
- ONS. (2006). Asylum Statistics: 1st Quarter United Kingdom. *Home Office*

- ONS. (2006). Asylum Statistics: 2nd Quarter United Kingdom. *Home Office*
- ONS. (2006). Asylum Statistics: 3rd Quarter United Kingdom. *Home Office*
- ONS. (2006). Asylum Statistics: 4th Quarter United Kingdom. *Home Office*
- ONS. (2007). Asylum Statistics: 1st Quarter United Kingdom. *Home Office*
- ONS. (2007). Asylum Statistics: 2nd Quarter United Kingdom. *Home Office*
- Ousley, H. (2001). Community Pride not Prejudice: Making Diversity work in Bradford. *Bradford's Race Review*
- Owen, D. (1994). *Maturity and Modernity: Nietzsche, Weber, Foucault and the Ambivalence of Reason*. London: Routledge
- Papadopoulos, I & Lees, S. (2002). Developing Culturally Competent Researchers. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 37(3), 258-64
- Parekh, B. (2000). *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain: The Parekh Report*. London: Profile Books Ltd
- Parekh, B. (2000). *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory*. Basingstoke: Macmillan
- Park, R. E. (1925). The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behavior. In R. E. Park, W. Burgess, & R. D. McKenzie (pp. 577-612). *The City*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press
- Parliamentary Reports. (1988/9). *House of Commons Standing Committee B, Nationality Immigration and Asylum Act 1999*
- Pearce, J. Pearce, J. & Wynne, A. (2005). *The experiences of Refugees and Asylum Seekers living in Denton*. Report prepared for Denton Community Safety Partnership
- Phillips, D. (2004). 'Parallel Lives? Challenging Discourses of British Muslim Self-Segregation. (unpublished)
- Phillips, T. (2005). Sleepwalking towards a segregated society. *BBC Breakfast*. 2 September
- Pink, S. (2000). 'Informants' who come 'home'. In V. Amit, (Ed.), *Constructing the Field: Ethnographic Fieldwork in the Contemporary World* (pp.96-119). London: Routledge
- Pinkerton, C., McLaughlan, G., & Salt, J. (2004). *Sizing the illegally resident population in the UK*. Migration Research Unit, University College, London: Home Office Online Report 54/04, www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/rdsolr5804.pdf
- Pollins, H. (1982). *Economic History of Jews in England*. London: Associated University Press

- Portes, A. (1987). The Social Origins of the Cuban Enclave Economy of Miami. *Sociological Perspectives*, 30, 340-372
- Poulsen, M. F., Johnston, R. J., & Forrest, J. (2001). Interurban Ethnic Enclaves: introducing a Knowledge-based Classification Method. *Environment and Planning A*, 33, 2071-2082
- Poulsen, M. F., Johnston, R. J., & Forrest, J. (2002). Plural Cities and Ethnic Enclaves: Introducing a Measurement Procedure for Comparative Study. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 26(2) 229-243
- Purdue, D. (2001). Neighbourhood Governance: Leadership, Trust and Social Capital. *Urban Studies*, 38(12), 2211-2224
- Reeves, F. (1983). *British Racial Discourse*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Refugee Action. (2006). The Destitution Trap: Asylum's untold story. *Refugee Action*
- Refugee Council (2002)
http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/infocentre/nia_act2002/intro_ed1.htm
- Refugee Council. (2004).
www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/infocentre/asylumlaw/legis_overview.htm
- Rex, J., & Moore, R. (1967). *Race Community and Conflict: a study of Sparkbrook*. London: Oxford University Press
- Rex, J. & Tomlinson, S. (1979). *Colonial Immigrants in a British City: A Class Analysis*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul
- Rex, R. (1981). Urban segregation and inner city policy in Great Britain. In C. Peach, V. Robinson, & S. Smith (Eds.), *Ethnic Segregation in Cities* (pp.25-42). London: Croom Helm
- Rex, J. (1986). The role of class analysis in the study of race relations – Weberian perspective. In, J. Rex & D. Mason (Eds.), *Theories of Race and Ethnic Relations* (64-83). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Rex, J. (1986). *Race and Ethnicity*. Milton Keynes: Open University
- Rex, J. (1988). *The Ghetto and the Underclass: essays on Race and Social Policy*. Avebury: Aldershot
- Rich, P. (1986). *Race and Empire in British Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Richards, L. (2002). *Host Community Responses to Refugees and Asylum Seekers: Attitudes do matter and can be changed by appropriate policies*. MSc Technology Strategy Research Dissertation. Milton Keynes: Open University

- Richards, L. & Wolfe, M. (2003). *Ethnic Minority Business Needs*. Research commissioned by *Regional Enterprise Development, University of Denton*
- Richmond, A. H. (1973). *Migration and Race Relations in an English City: A study in Bristol*. London: Oxford University Press
- Robinson, D. and Reeve, K. (2006). *Neighbourhood experiences of new immigration: Reflections from the evidence base*. Report prepared for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation
- Robinson, V. (1986). *Transients, settlers and refugees: Asians in Britain*. Oxford: Clarendon Press
- Robinson, V. (1996b). Indians: onward and upward. In C. Peach, (Ed.) *Ethnicity in the 1991 census. Vol 2: The ethnic minority populations of Great Britain* (95-121). London: HMSO
- Robinson, V. (1998). The Importance of Information in the Resettlement of Refugees in the UK. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 11(2), 146-160
- Robinson, V. (1999). Cultures of Ignorance, Disbelief and Denial: Refugees in Wales. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 12(1), 78-87
- Robinson, V., & Segrott, J. (2002). *Understanding the decision making of asylum seekers*. Research Paper 143. London: Home Office
- Robinson, V., Andersson, R., & Musterd, S. (2003). *Spreading the Burden?: A review of policies to disperse asylum seekers and refugees*. Bristol: Policy Press
- Sales, R. (2005). Secure Borders, Safe Haven: A contradiction in terms? *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 28(3), 445-462
- Sapsford, R. (1999). *Survey Research*. London: Sage
- Sayer, A. (1992). *Method in Social Science: A Realist Approach*, 2nd edition. London: Routledge
- Schramm, W. (1971). Notes on case studies of instructional media projects. Working Paper, *Academy for Educational Development*, Washington DC
- Schuman, H., & Converse, J. (1971). The Effects of Black and White Interviewers on Black Responses in 1968. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 35, 44-68
- Sending, O. J., & Neumann, I. B. (2006). Governance to Governmentality: Analyzing NGOs, States, and Power. *International Studies Quarterly*, 50, 651-672
- Sherman, A. (1973). *Island Refuge: Britain and Refugees from the Third Reich*. London: Paul Elek

- Sibley, D. (1995). *Geographies of exclusion*. London: Routledge
- Sivanandan, A. (1982). *A Different Hunger*. London: Pluto Press
- Sivanandan, A. (2000). Commentary: UK, Reclaiming the struggle. *Race and Class*, 42(2), 67-90
- Skeggs, B. (1994). Situating the production of feminist ethnography. In M. Maynard & J. Purvis (Eds.), *Researching Women's Lives from a feminist perspective* (pp. 72-92). London: Taylor & Francis
- Solomos, J. (1988). *Black Youth, Racism and the State*. Cambridge University Press
- Solomos, J. (1989). *Race and Racism in Contemporary Britain*. Basingstoke: Macmillan
- Solomos, J. (2003). *Race and Racism in Britain*, 3rd edition. Basingstoke: Palgrave
- Song, M., & Parker, D. (1995). Commonality, Difference and the Dynamics of Disclosure in In-Depth Interviewing. *Sociology*, 29(2), 241-56
- SOPEMI. (2001). *Trends in International Migration*. OECD: Paris
- Spencer, S. (2001). *UK Migration Policy 2001*. London: Institute for Public Policy Research
- Stake, R. E. (1978). The case study method of social enquiry. *Educational Researcher*, 7(2), 5-8
- Stake, R. E. (1994). Case Studies. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 435-454). Thousand Oaks: Sage
- Stalker, P. (2002). Migration Trends and Migration Policy in Europe. *International Migration*, 40(5), 151-179
- Stallybrass, P. & White, P. (1986). *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*. London: Methuen
- Strauss, A. (1987). *Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of Qualitative Research*. Newbury Park, California: Sage
- Stewart, E. (2005). Exploring the Vulnerability of Asylum Seekers in the UK. *Population, Space and Place*, 11, 499-512
- Subhra, G. (2002). Developing Services for Refugees & People Seeking Asylum: A Research project looking at the issues facing people seeking asylum & refugees and the development of services in Derby, Leicester & Nottingham. Report for *Refugee Action/University of Denton//Denton Millennium Network*

- Swinerton, E. N., Kuepper, W. G., & Lackey, G. L. (1975). *Ugandan Asians in Great Britain*. London: Croom Helm
- Swyngedouw, E. (2005). Governance Innovation and the Citizen: The Janus Face of Governance-beyond-the-State. *Urban Studies*, 42(11), 1991-2006
- Tannahill, J. A. (1958). *European Volunteer Workers in Britain*. Manchester: Manchester University Press
- Tapp, J. L. & Levine, F. J. (1977). *Law, Justice, and the Individual in Society*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston
- Taylor, S. (2001). Evaluating and applying discourse analytic research. In M. Wetherell, S. Taylor & S. J. Yates, *Discourse as Data: a guide for analysis* (pp. 311-330). London: Sage
- Taylor, S. (2001). Locating and conducting discourse analytic research. In M. Wetherell, S. Taylor, & S. J. Yates, *Discourse as data: a guide for analysis* (pp. 5-48). London: Sage
- Taylor, S. (Ed.). (2002). Researching the Social. In S. Taylor (Ed.), *Ethnographic Research: A Reader* (pp. 1-12). London: Sage
- Teuton, J. (2003). *Psychosocial distress and mental health problems experienced by asylum seekers and refugees in Nottingham: a needs assessment*. Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust
- Thomas, A. (1998). Challenging Cases. In A. Thomas, J. Chataway, M. Wuyts (Eds.), *Finding Out Fast* (pp. 307-332). London: Sage
- Touraine, A. (1997). Faux et Vrais Problèmes. Une Société Fragmentée? In M. Wicviorka (Ed.), *Le Multiculturalisme en Debat* (pp 291-319). Paris: La Découverte
- Turner, T. (1993). Anthropology and Multiculturalism: What is Anthropology that Multiculturalists Should Be Mindful of It? *Cultural Anthropology*, 8(4), 411-429
- Twine, F. W. (2000). Racial ideologies and Racial Methodologies. In F. W. Twine, & J. Warren (Eds.), *Racing Research, Researching Race* (pp. 1-34). New York: New York University Press
- UNHCR. (1951). *UN Geneva Convention on Refugees in 1951*. Geneva: UNHCR Media Relations and Public Information Service
- UNHCR. (1967). *Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees*. Geneva: UNHCR Media Relations and Public Information Service
- UNHCR. (2004). 26 June. www.unhcr.ch

UNHCR. (2004). 25 July. www.unhcr.ch

Valentine, G., & McDonald, I. (2004). *Understanding Prejudice: Attitudes Towards Minorities*. London: Stonewall

Van den Berghe, P. (1996). Does Race Matter? In Hutchinson, J and Smith, A. D. (Eds.), *Ethnicity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Van Dijk T. (2001). Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis. In M. Wetherell, S. Taylor, S. J. Yates, *Discourse Theory and Practice: a reader* (pp. 300-317). London: Sage

Vertovec, S. (2005). From 'Multiculturalism to Superdiversity. Paper presented at the *Future of Multicultural Britain: Meeting across boundaries*, 14-15 June 2005 Roehampton University, London organized by the Centre for Research on Nationalism, Ethnicity and Multiculturalism (CRONEM)

Veugelers, J. W. P. (1994). Recent Immigration Politics in Italy: A Short Story. In M. Baldwin-Edwards, & M. A. Schain (Eds.), *The Politics of Immigration in Western Europe* (pp. 33-49). Ilford: Frank Cass

Vidich, A., & Lyman, S. (1998). Qualitative methods: their history in sociology and anthropology. In N. Denzin, & Y. Lincoln, (Eds.) *The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues* (pp. 37-84). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Wallman, S. (1988). Ethnicity and the boundary process in context. In D. Mason, & J. Rex, *Theories of Ethnic and Race Relations* (pp. 226-245). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Weller, P. & Wolfe, M. (2003). Involving Religions: Religious Group Participation, Inter-Faith Infrastructure, and Capacity-Building in Denton. *Community Empowerment Fund*

Weller, P. (2005). *Time for a change: Reconfiguring Religion, State and Society*. London: T&T Clark International

Werbner, P. (1990). *The Migration Process: Capital, Gifts and Offerings among British Pakistanis*. Oxford: Berg

Werbner, P. & Anwar, M. (Eds.). (1991). *Black and ethnic leaderships in Britain*. London: Routledge

Werbner, P. (1998). Diasporic Political Imaginaries: A Sphere of Freedom or a Sphere of Illusions?. *Communal/Plural* 6(1), 11-21

Whitehead, L. (2003). *Asylum seekers and refugees in Liverpool: an evaluation of a family support project*. HaCCRU: University of Liverpool

Willis, P. (1977). *Learning to labour: How working class kids get working class jobs*. Westmead UK: Saxon House

- Willis, P. & Trondman, M. (2000). Manifesto for ethnography. *Ethnography*, 1(1), 5-16
- Wilson, W. J. (1993). *The Ghetto Underclass: Social Science Perspectives*. London: Sage
- Wojcik, Z., Mieczyslaw, P. S. (2006). *Building Bridges: Asylum Seekers in Denton*. Denton Racial Equality Council
- Woodhouse, P. (1998). Thinking with People and Organizations: People as Informants. In A. Thomas, J. Chataway, & M. Wuyts (Eds.), *Finding Out Fast: Investigative Skills for Policy and Development* (pp. 127-146). London: Sage
- Wright, S. (1994). Introduction to Clients and Empowerment. In S. Wright (Ed.), *Anthropology of Organisations* (pp. 161-167). London: Routledge
- Yin, R. (1994). *Case Study Research, Design and Methods*, 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
- Zetter, R. & Pearl, M. (1999). *Managing to survive: Asylum seekers, refugees and access to social housing*. Bristol: The Policy Press
- Zetter, R., Griffiths, D., Sigona, N., & Hauser, M. (2002). Survey on Policy and Practice related to refugee integration. Commissioned by *European Refugee Fund Community Actions 2001/2*
- Zetter, R., Griffiths, D., Ferretti, S., Romer, K., & Sigona, N. (2002b). *Asylum policy and practice in Europe: an indepth analysis of current practices for the reception of asylum seekers*. Commissioned for the Home Office, final Home Office Report. London: Home Office
- Zetter, R., Griffiths, D., Ferretti, S., & Pearl, M. (2003). An Assessment of the impact of asylum policies in Europe 1990-2000. *Home Office Research Study 259*
- Zetter, R., Griffiths, D., & Sigona, N. (2005). *Refugee Community Organisations and dispersal: Networks, resources and social capital*. Bristol: Policy Press
- Zubrzycki, J. (1956). *Polish Immigrants to Britain*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff